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ABSTRACT

This manual is intended for use by persons with psychiatric disabilities who are employed in the community but need to improve their social skills to maintain their employment. It is designed to be taught to mental health consumers by mental health consumers. Each session outline includes objectives; a list of materials needed; and exercises that involve role plays, problem solving, and reactions to case studies. The course is divided into 19 sessions, with each session focusing on a specific skill. Covered are: the importance of social skills at work; becoming acquainted with co-workers at appropriate times; coping with mental illness; coping with social withdrawal and lack of motivation; coping with low levels of self-esteem and lack of confidence; understanding others' facial expressions and body language; smoking etiquette in the workplace; resisting the temptation to smoke; assessing the appropriateness of a raise or extra benefits; requesting a raise or extra benefits; getting along with the supervisor; resolving conflicts with the supervisor; friendships and romance in the workplace; discouraging unwanted romantic advances at work; knowing your rights as an employee; quitting a job; coping with being laid off or fired; appropriate behaviors following job termination; and evaluating the curriculum. (DB)

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SUSTAINING EMPLOYMENT: SOCIAL SKILLS AT WORK

Thresholds

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Sustaining Employment: Social Skills at Work

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Thresholds Supported Competitive Employment Program
for Youth with Severe Mental Illness*

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Sustaining Employment: Social Skills at Work

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Introduction to the Social Skills at Work curriculum

Curriculum Purposes. The Social Skills at Work program is designed for persons with psychiatric disabilities who have already secured community employment, but need to refine their social skills in order to **maintain** their jobs. As is typical in most literature on skills training for persons with mental illness, social skills are defined as: 1) specific verbal and non-verbal communication skills such as voice tone and body posture; 2) the ability to engage in positive social interactions by behaving in a competent and well-adjusted manner; and 3) the cognitive capabilities necessary to receive and perceive social information and then formulate appropriate social responses (Liberman et al., 1986). These skills, which are not necessarily related to actual job tasks, include: good social and working relationships with co-workers and supervisors; healthy methods of coping with mental illness and its symptoms; appropriate behavior in the work setting; and the proper way to terminate employment if necessary.

Instructional Methods. The Social Skills at Work curriculum teaches appropriate social behaviors and attitudes through use of exercises that involve role plays, problem solving, and individuals' reactions to case studies that parallel their own experiences. Special emphasis is placed on completing all homework assignments, as well as writing in a journal on a weekly basis. Group members are encouraged to bring folders to class in which to save all handouts, lists, and notes. Moreover, the participants are expected to practice the newly acquired behaviors in their daily lives and to report to the class the responses they encounter. Based on these reports, the individual's peers and the group leader(s) will offer feedback and concrete suggestions about ways to better handle similar situations in the future. The goal is to expedite the generalization and durability of skills acquired in class to actual work environments, which is an important, and often missing, outcome for training programs of this nature (Martinez-Diaz, 1988).

Liberman, R., Mueser, K., Wallace, C., Jacobs, H., Eckman, T., & Massel, K. (1986). Training skills in the psychiatrically disabled: Learning coping and competence. Schizophrenia Bulletin, 12(4), 631-647.

Martinez-Diaz, J., Massel, H., Wong, S., Wiegand, W., Bowen, L., Edelstein, B., Marshall, R., and Liberman, R. (1983, December). Training of generalization of conversational skills in chronic schizophrenics. Paper presented at the World Congress on Behavior Therapy, Washington, DC.

Consumers as Instructors. We have designed this curriculum so that it can be taught to mental health consumers by other mental health consumers. Consumer-teachers bring a unique perspective to their role as instructor by incorporating their own experiences and insights into the material they teach. In addition, consumer-teachers offer support and empathy as participants grapple with some of the challenging issues raised by the group. We have found that consumers are able to facilitate discussions effectively because they do not shy away from sensitive topics. They also have less difficulty knowing when to be firm and when to be flexible.

Each session begins with a list of objectives and the materials needed for that day. We suggest that instructors, case managers, or consumer-teachers read each session of this curriculum in advance so that they are better able to prepare handouts, role plays, and their own notes before class. (Please note that each time a role play or handout is used, it is noted in the **margins** of the text by an "RP" for role play and an "H" for handout.)

Every session is introduced to the group with a review of the previous session in order to provide continuity between sessions, as well as to reinforce learning. This review also will give feedback to group leaders about the instructional methods that are most effective and those that may need some modification, depending upon the group with which they are working at the time. We believe that this type of flexibility is necessary when working with persons who have severe mental illness, particularly if they have thought disorders and/or side effects from their medications which lead to impaired concentration or difficulty following directions. The curriculum has been designed so that members do not have to leave the group if employment is terminated. Instead, these participants will be asked to think about past employment during their participation in the Social Skills at Work sessions.

Finally, in order to enable all participants to read the scripts while classmates perform the role plays, group leaders should write the scripts on transparencies to be used on an overhead projector. Because participants may want to refer to scripts when they encounter similar situations while at work, we advise facilitators to make each role play into a handout to be used in class and then saved in participants' folders.

Curriculum Structure. The social skills training course is divided into nineteen lessons, each meeting every week for one afternoon. We advise that it be coordinated and supervised by teachers, case managers, or consumer-teachers who have had experience working with persons who have psychiatric disabilities, particularly in community settings.

Again, the curriculum is quite flexible in its design so that group leaders can structure the course around their organizations' goals and work schedules, as well as group members' previous experiences and abilities.

Session 1: The Importance of Social Skills at Work

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Become acquainted with one another and the facilitators;

2. Discuss the importance of social skills to employment;

3. Explain why it is important to get along with co-workers.

Materials:
Name tags or tent cards
Extra paper and pencils
Yellow highlighting markers
2 role play transparencies and accompanying handouts
1 handout for each participant

Procedures:

1. Before beginning this course, ask each participant's case manager (or someone who has regular contact with the individual) to complete the Waksman Social Skills Rating Form (Waksman, 1983) about this person. This scale will be filled out again at the end of this curriculum in order to measure changes in the participant's social skills. Although we have included a sample copy of the form at the end of this session, copies for actual testing, as well as instructions for use and interpretation, must be obtained from PRO-ED, 8700 Shoal Creek Boulevard, Austin, Texas, 78758.

2. To begin class, ask the participants to sit in a circle with you during all sessions to facilitate group comfort and discussions.

3. Introduce yourself and ask participants to give their names, as well as some piece of information about themselves (where the work, what they like to do, what they hope to get from this course, etc). Pass out the name tags or tent cards, and tell participants they will

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Waksman, S. (1983). Waksman social skills rating form (school edition). ASIEP Education Company, Portland, Oregon.

use them until everyone knows one another's names.

4. Describe the purpose of the course: to examine why social skills are an important part of successful employment; to determine the social skills required to maintain community employment; and to learn how to develop these skills.

5. Provide an overview of the particulars of the course:

   a. it will run for nineteen weeks, meeting in nineteen, one hour sessions, once a week;

   b. attendance is mandatory, as is participation in group discussions and exercises, completion of all homework assignments, and keeping of a journal;

   c. all participants must have a folder for handouts or other assignments.

6. Ask the participants to share their ideas about the importance of social skills at work. Point out that the employment process is not over once the participants obtain jobs. They will need to learn not only their job tasks, but many other skills that help them to maintain employment.

   Ask participants to share some of the skills (other than those related to the actual job tasks) that they believe are an important part of maintaining employment. Mention the following points if the participants do not: good social and working relationships with co-workers and supervisors; healthy ways to cope with mental illness and its symptoms; appropriate behavior in the work setting; and the proper way to terminate employment if necessary.

7. Ask the participants to tell why they think it is important to get along with co-workers. Be sure to mention the following points if the participants do not:

a. Co-workers can help new workers to learn their jobs. For example, they can answer certain questions about the job that new workers do not want to ask their bosses;

b. Co-workers can help the new workers to execute their job tasks and responsibilities;

c. Co-workers can provide encouragement and support to new employees;

d. Co-workers can get the job done more efficiently by cooperating with one another and working together as a team. It is important for all workers to contribute their part in order to maintain efficient operation of the company;

e. Co-workers can become friends (especially because by working together they will have something in common) and make work more enjoyable.

8. Ask each participant to share with the class at least one of his or her job responsibilities. Then, instruct them to make a list of **all** of their job responsibilities on paper and to highlight their chief responsibilities with a yellow marker.

9. Tell the participants to study their lists of responsibilities, and ask them what questions they might ask co-workers in order to learn how to carry out these responsibilities. Request that they think about their **daily** job tasks, since it is with these that co-workers are likely to be most helpful. For example, if one of the participants is responsible for delivering mail, he or she might ask a co-worker the following questions:

   a. "Is it acceptable to put mail in Mr. Rausch's in-box if he has his office door closed, or should I wait until his door is open?"

   b. "Should I put photocopies requested by an employee for a supervisor on the supervisor's desk or on the employee's desk?"

RP

10. Model a situation in which you are a new worker asking question 8a. Ask a participant to role play the situation with you. Review the Instructional Methods from the Introduction in order to prepare for this role play. Tell the participants that the setting is the mail room of a law firm and that you are a new worker asking a co-worker for advice.

NEW WORKER: Excuse me, (name of participant). I have a quick question before I start making my rounds. I've noticed that Mr. Rausch sometimes has his door closed. Is it okay to put mail in his in-box if the door is closed, or should I wait until the door is open?

MAIL SORTER: Mr. Rausch usually has his door open. He closes it when he has some very important business to do. Always wait until the door is open to deliver his mail. If you go to his office a second time and his door is still closed, then you should give his mail to his assistant, Edward.

NEW WORKER: Thanks for the tip.

MAIL SORTER: No problem.

H1

11. Then, ask the participants to think about times that they have asked co-workers for help while working. Pass out Handout 1. Read the situations aloud while the participants read silently. After reading, ask:

    a. Why did Lenny need help?
    b. Why did Tania need help?
    c. Who did not have a good reason to ask a co-worker for help? Why?

    Ask group members to keep this handout in their folders.

12. Now, ask the participants to think of times at work when they have received encouragement from co-workers. If they have trouble coming up with examples, provide some from your own work experiences. Ask them to consider types of encouragement that can be given to someone who serves ice cream at a fast food restaurant. For instance, after a busy lunch hour, a co-worker might praise the new worker for a job well done.

RP

13. Ask the participants to make lists of the people with whom they work and to describe some of these workers' job responsibilities. Next, ask them what products or services their companies provide and how they and their co-workers help to furnish those products or services. The lists that they have just written will help them to answer these questions. Also, point out that the company might suffer financially, or may not be able to meet production quotas, if they and their co-workers do not work well together.

To help clarify why it is important to work as a team, role play the following situation with a participant:

NEW WORKER: You look as though you're slowing down, (name of participant).

CO-WORKER: I feel really tired today, (name of leader). I'm going to lie down in the lounge for a while. Clean my tables until I come back.

NEW WORKER: Wait a minute. I know what it's like to be tired, but I've got ten tables of my own to clean. I can't clean your ten, too. We're in the middle of the lunch rush hour, and customers are waiting in line for a table. I just can't do the work of two people.

Prompt the participants to discuss how the co-worker was taking advantage of the other worker and why this would upset the new worker. Help them to understand that they must not do this to or accept this from other workers.

Ask the participants to save the list that they made in their folders.

14. To wrap up this first session, encourage the participants to ask any other questions that they may have about the importance of social skills at work. Then, for homework, ask them to observe situations at work during the following week in which they note the importance of these skills, and record them in their journals.

Also, ask them to write about any situations in which co-workers help them to do a difficult task or give them encouragement and support. Lastly, ask them to write about different ways

in which co-workers helped them to learn their jobs when they were first starting out.

15. Inform the group that the next session will discuss ways of getting to know co-workers, and times when socializing at work is appropriate. Ask them to write any ideas that they may have on this subject in their journals.

The Waksman Social Skills Rating Form*

Student's Name _____

This rating scale should be completed by someone who has daily contact with the student. This person's basis for comparison should be the average person in the general population. All items should be rated based on observation or first hand knowledge and each item should be checked once. The purpose of this rating scale is to give specific information to specialists and support personnel who may need to further evaluate or prescribe services for this client. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Aggressive Domain	Usually 3	Often 2	Seldom 1	Never 0
1) insults others				
2) threatens others				
3) speaks in a demanding voice				
4) hits rather than touches				
5) interrupts often				
6) fails to acknowledge criticism				
7) fails to share property				
8) fails to assist others				
9) speaks rudely				

Aggressive Subtotal _____ Percentile _____

Passive Domain	Usually 3	Often 2	Seldom 1	Never 0
10) avoids looking others in the eye				
11) has difficulty saying no				
12) dull or flattened voice				
13) fails to acknowledge compliments				
14) uses one-word answers				
15) appears tense				
16) avoids touching others				
17) avoids joining groups				
18) fails to initiate conversation				
19) avoids asking for help				
20) avoids speaking of feelings				
21) has difficulty making decisions				

Passive subtotal _____ Percentile _____

Aggressive + Passive Score = _____ Percentile _____

_____

Obtain copies from PRO-ED, 8700 Shoal Creek Boulevard, Austin, Texas, 78758.

Case Study of Lenny

Lenny is vacuuming the carpet of a long hallway on the second floor of an office building. His instructions are to vacuum the floors, including the areas under furniture or planters. He is one of five workers who clean this building. As he gets ready to move a large planter containing a small tree, he realizes he will need help pushing it aside. Lenny sees Dave, who has just finished cleaning Room 248, walking towards him.

"Could you give me some help over here, Dave?" Lenny asks. "I need to shove this heavy planter aside, vacuum, and then move it back again."

"Sure thing, Lenny," replies Dave. "I'm running a little ahead of schedule, anyway. It will only take a few minutes if we work together."

Case Study of Tania

Tania is filing papers in an office. Because she has been daydreaming all morning, she has not been able to keep her mind on her work the way she usually does. She looks at the clock and realizes that she has only thirty minutes left to file a big stack of papers that she was told to have done by noon. Tania turns to Clare, who has just finished photocopying some pages of a report.

"Could you help me file these papers, Clare? I've been getting behind today because I can't seem to concentrate on what I'm doing."

"I'm sorry," replies Clare, "but I still have a few more things to do. I'd get behind myself if I were to help you. Do the best that you can."

Related questions:

1. Why did Lenny need help?
2. Why did Tania need help?
3. Who did not have a good reason to ask a co-worker for help? Why?

Session 2: Becoming Acquainted with Co-workers at Appropriate Times

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Identify different ways to become acquainted with co-workers;

2. Recognize that socializing may interfere with completing job tasks and, based on this, identify times when socializing is appropriate;

3. Discuss opportunities that may arise to become acquainted with co-workers **outside** of their places of employment.

Materials: 1 role play transparency and accompanying handout

Procedures:

1. Review the last session by asking participants to share their journal entries with the class. You should be able to tell by their observations how well they understand the concept of social skills in the workplace, as well as how successfully they are getting along with their co-workers. Review any points that remain unclear.

2. Ask the participants to think of ways in which they can become acquainted with co-workers. Tell them to think of the times when they will be able to get to know the people at work, such as while on break, at lunch time, and after work. Remind the participants that working hours are to be devoted to carrying out job responsibilities, not to socializing with co-workers.

RP

3. To help them think of ways to meet other workers, role play the following situation with a participant. Ask the volunteer to pretend that he or she is the experienced worker and that you are the new worker. Make it clear that this exchange should take place while they are on break or at lunch.

NEW WORKER: Hello, my name is (leader's name). I just started working here yesterday.

CO-WORKER: Glad to have you on board! My name is (participant's name). What's your job here?

NEW WORKER: I unpack coats in the shipping department and hang them up to be cleaned and pressed. What's your job?

CO-WORKER: I pick up where you leave off. I press the coat linings after the coats are taken out of the dry cleaning machines.

NEW WORKER: How long have you been doing that?

CO-WORKER: About a year. I started last May. Well, break's over. Back to work. It was nice to meet you.

NEW WORKER: Thanks! You, too.

---

4. Choose one or two of the examples given earlier by the participants of ways to become acquainted with co-workers, and help them to role play the situations (e.g., write the scripts on the board as they make them up, play the role of the new or experienced worker, etc.).

5. Ask the participants to take out their lists of job responsibilities made in the previous session. Go around the room, and ask each participant to think of one example of how inappropriate socializing might keep him or her from carrying out these responsibilities. For instance, if a worker is responsible for keeping an eye on the timer while the french fries are cooking, stopping to chat with a co-worker might keep him or her from doing the job correctly. As a result, the french fries might burn.

6. Next, tell the participants to think about how they might keep **others** from carrying out their responsibilities by socializing excessively on the job. Give the example of someone who works in a large office who often disturbs co-workers by talking while they are trying to concentrate on their work.

7. Finally, instruct the participants to think of opportunities to become acquainted with co-workers **outside** of their places of employment. For example, company picnics, sports events in which employees participate, and informal gatherings after work are all good opportunities to socialize with co-workers. (See Sessions 13 and 14 for further discussion of this topic.)

8. For homework, ask the participants to think about ways in which they have become acquainted with co-workers and to record these in their journals. Instruct them to decide whether or not the ways that they made friends at work would be considered appropriate by the standards discussed in this session. If not, ask them to write about how they would do things differently, given the chance. If there are participants who are not currently employed, ask them to create several role plays like the ones you did in class about becoming acquainted with other workers.

9. Inform them that the next session will discuss how to handle questions that co-workers may ask about their illness. Request that they think about situations in which co-workers have actually asked them about their psychiatric disability, and how they responded or would have liked to have responded.

Session 3: Coping With Mental Illness

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Describe work situations in which their histories of mental illness might come up with co-workers;

2. Role play work situations in which they are asked questions about their psychiatric histories.

Materials: 1 role play transparency and accompanying handout
1 handout for each participant

Procedures:

1. Review the last session by asking several participants to share what they have written in their journals. If they have come up with ways to socialize that you consider inappropriate, discuss this with them and suggest alternatives. This also will help you to decide which points from Session 2 need stronger emphasis in future sessions.

2. Introduce this session by pointing out that the ways in which they handle questions about their illness will influence how they are treated by co-workers or friends. Needless to say, this is a difficult subject and their willingness to discuss it should be handled sensitively. Consumer-teachers can be especially effective in this exercise by sharing their own experiences.

H2

3. Handout 2 will help the participants to identify their own reactions and feelings with those of another person. Read the handout aloud as they read silently. After reading, ask:

   a. What questions did Paul ask that were embarrassing for Dolores to answer?
   b. How did Dolores answer the questions? Were these good answers? Why or why not?
   c. What did Dolores find out about her co-workers?
   d. Do you think that she should feel as though she has something in common with them or that she is really different? Explain your answer.

   Tell group members to keep this handout in their folders.

RP

4. Next, question the participants as to whether co-workers have ever asked them about mental illness and how sensitively the question was phrased. If this has come up, help them to express how they felt about it and what they said in reply. Explain to the participants that a good response to this kind of question is brief, direct, and honest, but does not reveal facts about their lives that they find embarrassing or unnecessary to reveal. Role play the following with a volunteer to illustrate this point:

NEW WORKER: Wow! Am I ever tired, (name of participant). It's going to take me a little while to get used to the fast pace here.

CO-WORKER: Yeah, it must be really tough for you. You were in a mental hospital, right?

NEW WORKER: I was ill for a while last year, but I'm feeling much better now.

CO-WORKER: Do you really think you'll be able to take the pressure?

NEW WORKER: Like everyone, I'm going to have to learn to deal with the pressure of a new job, but I'm prepared. And I think I'm going to like this job!

CO-WORKER: You think you're ready for Tom? He's on everyone's back at rush hour to clean up a table as soon as a customer leaves it. He's chewed me out a lot about not being fast enough.

NEW WORKER: I haven't been on the job very long. I guess I'll make up my mind about Tom once I've been here a while. See you later, (name of leader).

Point out that the new worker did not dwell on the past, but stated briefly and honestly that he or she had been ill. The new worker quickly moved on by making a positive statement about the present situation, thereby avoiding involvement in the complaining of the co-worker. Stress that they want to convey a positive outlook, so they should not get involved in making negative statements about the job or the people with whom they work.

5. Ask the participants to talk about situations at work, or elsewhere, in which they were asked questions about their own psychiatric histories. If they feel comfortable doing so, ask them to reveal exactly what questions were asked, what they answered, and how the other people reacted. Be prepared to meet with resistance from the participants, and take as much time as necessary to get them to discuss at least **some** of their feelings. If possible, share your own feelings on the subject.

6. To bring this session to a close, tell the participants that asking questions about a person's past is a common way to become acquainted with someone. Because being asked questions about one's past is a natural part of getting to know others, tell participants that it is best to think ahead about how to answer these questions positively and casually.

7. Point out to the group that if they wish to express their feelings about coping with mental illness, but could not do so in class, they should write about it in their journals. Encourage even those participants who did discuss their feelings in class to elaborate on them in their journals. Also, if they wish to discuss it with you privately after class, and **you** feel comfortable doing so, you can offer that option. If you do not feel comfortable with this, direct them to discuss their feelings with their case workers or other consumers.

8. Tell the group that the next two sessions will focus on difficult issues characteristic of mental illness and appropriate ways in which to cope.

Case Study of Dolores

Dolores is drinking coffee with three co-workers in the lounge during her fifteen minute break. It is Dolores' second day on the job, and Larry has just invited her to join the group for lunch.

"Dolores, do you know the Chinese restaurant on the corner?" asks Larry. "You can get a good, inexpensive lunch there. How about it?"

"Sure. I'm a big fan of Chinese food," Dolores replies.

"It's good to have someone help us out, Dolores," says Paul. "We were really short-handed for a while, so we felt overworked. By the way, what did you do before you got this job?"

Dolores pauses and thinks carefully about what she should say. She feels embarrassed because she was hospitalized for four weeks before she landed this job. Finally, she gets up her nerve and says, "I was ill for awhile before I got this job, but I'm getting back on my feet now. Having this job means a whole lot to me. I'm glad to be here."

"We've all had our share of problems, too," says Larry. "I know I have. My mom's been in the hospital recovering from a car accident, and I've spent a lot of time visiting her. It's been hard to work all day and then go to the hospital after work. I don't get home until after 10:00. Sometimes I feel like calling in sick because I'm so tired, but I know that wouldn't be fair to the gang at work. Speaking of problems, how's night school going, Roberta?"

"I'm just barely keeping up with all the work," Roberta says. "I wish I could take this course next spring instead of this semester."

"And, of course, Paul here is holding his own," says Larry, winking at him, "after breaking up with his girlfriend. So what problems did you have, Dolores?"

"Personal problems that really got me down, like yours," answers Dolores. "But here I am, ready for work, and for lunch at a Chinese restaurant!"

Related questions:

1. What questions did Paul ask that were embarrassing for Dolores to answer?
2. How did Dolores answer the questions? Were these good answers? Why or why not?
3. What did Dolores find out about her co-workers?
4. Do you think that she should feel as though she has something in common with them or that she is really different? Explain your answer.

Session 3, Handout 2

Session 4: Coping with Social Withdrawal and Lack of Motivation

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Recognize that social withdrawal and lack of motivation are two characteristics associated with mental illness;

2. Discuss how these characteristics interfere with positive social interaction at work;

3. Read about and discuss ways to improve communication in order to overcome these difficulties.

Materials: 3 handouts for each participant
Extra paper and pencils

Procedures:

1. Begin by reviewing the last session. Ask participants to share any feelings that they still wish to express about answering questions pertaining to past life events. Also, elicit feedback about the last session: likes, dislikes, feelings, or suggestions. Because the topic of coping with mental illness is so important -- as are the participants' levels of comfort with it -- we urge you to use this feedback to tailor future sessions.

2. Next, tell the participants that certain emotional and behavioral problems are commonly faced by people with their illness and may affect their social interactions. These problems are: social withdrawal, lack of motivation, lack of and low levels of confidence, and low self-esteem. This session will examine the former two, and the next, the latter two.

H3

3. Use Handout 3 to prompt a discussion about social withdrawal and mental illness. Read the case study aloud as the participants read silently. After reading, ask:

   a. What does Simon tend to do when he is with a group of co-workers?
   b. How has Simon decided to help himself overcome his fear of talking with a group of co-workers?
   c. What else might he do to overcome this fear?
   d. What should he avoid doing?

Ask the group to save this handout in their folders.

4. Tell the participants that overcoming withdrawal and starting conversations are easier if they stick to subjects that they feel comfortable discussing. Ask them to make a list of topics about which they know quite a bit. Then, help them to role play work situations in which they might discuss these topics with co-workers. Encourage them to keep up with news, the weather, or sports, since many employees discuss these topics before work, while on break, at lunch time, or after work.

5. Next, point out that lack of motivation is another characteristic associated with their illness. They may not seem interested in or enthusiastic about the things that their co-workers are. However, it is essential to make the effort to communicate with co-workers, since getting along with them is important for job success and a feeling of well-being.

H4

6. Spend time discussing effective communication, which is an important part of overcoming withdrawal. Convey that learning effective communication techniques will improve interactions and increase both the desire and ability to become more involved. Tell the participants that there are responses called "communication facilitators," both verbal and non-verbal, that can be used when interacting with co-workers. Some examples of these are: door openers, passive listening, acknowledgement responses, and active listening. Pass out Handout 4, and read it aloud while the participants read to themselves. Make sure they completely understand each method of communication.

H5

7. Next, give the group Handout 5, which will determine how well they understand these communication techniques. Read each example, and then ask them to decide which communication technique from Handout 4 is most appropriate for the situation and why. Ask them which would be most inappropriate and why, as well. Ask them to put both handouts in their folders.

8. To close this session, tell participants that their homework is to take the list of topics about which they are knowledgeable (prepared in class) and to try talking about these subjects with co-workers, family members, or

friends. Instruct them to record whether or not the interactions were successful. Also, ask them to observe (during the following week) general ways in which they interact with co-workers, family members, and friends and to write about which communication techniques they used in order to respond.

9. Inform them that the next session will cover problems due to lack of confidence or low levels of self-esteem.

Case Study of Simon

Simon was hospitalized twice last year. Just before he went into the hospital the first time, he spent most days in his room because he did not want to be around other people due to his severe depression. Because his parents invited few people into the house, Simon felt that they were embarrassed by his behavior, making him feel even more depressed.

During his second period of depression, Simon felt unable to motivate himself to interact with anyone because of his extreme apathy. He lost his job because he would not attend to personal appearance and was not able to speak to anyone at work.

Simon now has a job, but he still tends to withdraw from social situations. He has decided that in order to make it easier to interact with other people, he will exchange information about weather, sports, or a topic of interest that he holds in common with co-workers, like cars or movies. Simon watches the news every morning and evening to keep up with current events. He then shares what he has learned with interested co-workers.

Just this morning, he told Bonnie at work about the snow that was on the way. Bonnie was interested because a big snow storm would mean that she would have to leave early to catch a train home. Simon feels comfortable with this type of conversation because it is casual, and most employees are interested in a topic like the weather.

Related questions:

1. What does Simon tend to do when he is with a group of co-workers?
2. How has Simon decided to help himself overcome his fear of talking with a group of co-workers?
3. What else might he do to overcome this fear?
4. What should he avoid doing?

COMMUNICATION FACILITATORS

The following techniques can help you to better communicate what you are feeling or thinking. Try using these techniques when interacting with co-workers, family members, and friends.

Door openers (D.O.) are responses which show that you are listening to someone, want to continue listening and helping and are paying attention, even if you do not fully understand what is being said. Examples of door openers are:

"Can I be of help?"

"I've got time if you want to talk about it."

"Tell me about it."

"That's really interesting -- tell me more."

Passive listening (P.L.) is characterized by being silent and really listening. Sometimes, nothing needs to be said if the other person feels that he or she is being heard. You can let someone know that you are listening without speaking, by looking him or her directly in the eyes during the interaction.

Acknowledgement responses (A.R.) also let the other person know that you are really listening. Some are non-verbal, others are one word or simple statements. Examples of these are:

Eye contact

Nodding

"I agree with you!"

"I see your point."

"That's interesting."

Active listening (A.L.) uses counseling techniques such as restating, clarifying, and asking questions. In this way, you can check to see if what you heard was what the other person meant. Some examples of these are:

"So what you're saying is (repeat what you heard). . ."

"I'm not sure I understand. Do you mean (repeat what you think he or she meant to say). . ."

"Could you repeat that?"

Session 4, Handout 4

Adapted from the manual, Training Parents as Educators of Children with Handicapping Conditions, Lee, M.K. and Katz, D. (1987).

USING COMMUNICATION FACILITATORS

Using the previous handout, decide which communication facilitator would be the best to use in the following situations:

_____ 1. While on break, your co-workers start talking about the basketball game that they watched the night before. Although they obviously expect you to join in their conversation, you are not interested in sports. How do you respond?

_____ 2. You notice that a woman whom you've become close to at work is sitting by herself during lunch looking quite upset. You go over to her and she says she has had an awful weekend. What is your response?

_____ 3. Your supervisor comes up to you and says that he wants to show you a better way to clean your tables. He takes you over to one of the tables and begins to give a detailed explanation of the best way to clear and clean it. How do you respond?

_____ 4. A friend at work is describing how he feels about his recent break up with his girlfriend. You have never really felt the way he does when ending a relationship, but still want to show that you care. What is your response?

_____ 5. A co-worker has just been yelled at by the boss about something which she does not feel is her fault. She is very angry and, while explaining it to you, keeps repeating, "Why doesn't anyone ever listen to me? He didn't even hear what I had said!" What is the best response?

_____ 6. It seems to be common knowledge that a co-worker is having family problems. Throughout the day, a few concerned workers share with him their similar stories. Every time they do this, you notice that he gets very upset and refuses to speak. He asks you to have lunch with him because he wants "to talk about his problems with someone who is not full of advice." How do you respond to his conversation?

_____ 7. A co-worker is having trouble completing one of her job tasks. You think it may be because she did not understand the directions given to her by your boss at the beginning of the day. You know that she is proud and does not like to admit when she is confused, but you also know how to do the task with which she is struggling. What do you say to her?

Session 4, Handout 5

_____ 8. You really want to discuss a problem that you've been having at work with your supervisor. You tell him what has been bothering you, and he sets a time for you to meet the following afternoon. When you arrive at your meeting, he asks you to sit down, and promptly starts talking about things that are completely unrelated to your problem. You are very eager to discuss your own problem, but you know you cannot be rude to your boss. How do you respond to his conversation?

_____ 9. You are having lunch with two co-workers in the cafeteria. One of them, Teresa, begins to say negative things about Paul, who is a friend of yours at work. The other woman, Suzanne, immediately joins in the ridicule, and it becomes clear that they expect you to do the same. Because you know that Paul is a very nice person, you are suddenly not sure if Teresa and Suzanne are just joking. If they are teasing, you do not wish to look foolish by defending Paul for no real reason. However, if they are serious, you want to defend your friend. How should you respond to Teresa and Suzanne?

_____ 10. A friend of yours at work follows you into the lounge one morning, and she suddenly begins to cry when you greet her. Because you express concern, she tells you what is bothering her. You want to help, but most of what she is saying is completely unclear to you because she is crying so hard. Nevertheless, you notice that she begins to calm down as she is talking. How do you respond to this situation?

Session 4, Handout 5

Answer key:

1.	(A.R.)	2.	(D.O.)	3.	(A.L.)	4.	(A.L.)	5.	(A.R.)
6.	(P.L.)	7.	(D.O.)	8.	(A.R.)	9.	(A.L.)	10.	(P.L.)

Session 5: Coping with Low Levels of Self-Esteem and Lack of Confidence

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Recognize that lack of confidence and low levels of self-esteem are two difficulties associated with mental illness;

2. Discuss how these problems might interfere with positive social interaction at work;

3. Address some of the factors that affect confidence and self-esteem;

4. Role play a work situation that highlights how self-esteem and confidence affect social interactions.

Materials: 1 role play transparency and accompanying handout
1 handout for each participant

Procedures:

1. Review the last session by requesting that participants share their journal entries. Ask them to relate whether or not they found the communication facilitators to be useful.

2. Explain that self-esteem can greatly affect one's actions, values, successes, and failures. Often times, individuals with psychiatric disabilities have a lowered sense of self-worth due to certain characteristics of their illness (e.g., impaired concentration, disordered thought processes, and poor memory), as well as the stigma surrounding the illness, which lead them to believe that they will always fail or be rebuffed. Rejection at work or in social environments may have eroded their levels of confidence, causing them to avoid interaction entirely. You can help by conveying the message that just because they have had problems in certain situations does not mean that they will have problems in all situations.

H6

3. The factors described below have been shown to affect self-esteem and confidence over time. Keep in mind that these issues may make the participants uncomfortable or upset; therefore, we suggest that you use the fictional characters given in Handout 6 rather than discussing them in relation to participants' personal situations. Tell the group that the things that affect self-esteem and

confidence can be positive as well as negative, and the idea behind mentioning them is not to say that one thing is right and another wrong, but to give them a sense of **how** self-worth may be determined and maintained over time. Some of these factors are:

a. Relationships with Family Members - Does the individual have good relations with his or her parents and/or brothers and sisters? Does he feel tension between family members? Does she feel that she is the cause of the tension?

b. Past Successes and Failures - How did the family members handle this person's latest failure (loss of a job, not being promoted)? Was this person upset by this reaction, or did she expect it? How did family members react to the individual's latest success (getting a new job, getting a raise)? Was he happy to meet one of his goals, or did he experience fear about what success now means?

c. Friends and Peers - Have the person's friends drifted away? Does the individual avoid the old gang? Does she complain about no longer fitting in with her friends? Does he complain that fewer friends have come to the house lately?

Ask the participants each of these questions about the fictional characters in Handout 6. The first case study corresponds to the questions in point a, the second to the ones in point b, and the third to the ones in point c. Instruct them to keep this handout in their folders.

RP 4. Once the participants have an idea about some of the ways that self-esteem and confidence are developed and maintained, ask them to think about how a **lowered** sense of self-worth may affect social interactions at work. For instance, if they fear that they are not going to fit in with the other workers, they will tend to avoid speaking to anyone altogether.

This withdrawal most likely would alienate them further, thereby lowering their sense of self-worth to an even greater degree. Role play the following situation with a volunteer to demonstrate how this may occur:

CO-WORKER: Hey, (name of leader). Do you want to get a cup of coffee with us at break?

NEW WORKER: (nervous and not meeting the volunteer's eyes) Oh, no, not really. I'll just stay here and work.

CO-WORKER: (angry) What's the matter with you? We've asked you to come out with us at least five different times, and you never want to. In fact, you hardly talk at all to anyone here. I guess you think you're too good for us!

NEW WORKER: (confused) No, it's not that! It's just well, I just feel. . .

CO-WORKER: Yeah, well, just forget it!

Help the participants to understand that, in spite of the fact that the new worker feels the **opposite** of what the co-workers believe, he or she has alienated himself or herself from them. Convey that, even though it is scary sometimes to make friends at work, the participants and their co-workers will feel better if they at least **try** to interact.

5. To avoid making the participants feel that raising their self-esteem and confidence is an insurmountable task, point out that, just by attending this class and discussing factors that affect self-worth, they already are actively involved in redefining the ways they view themselves. Be sure to praise them for the work they already have accomplished in this class or, if it is appropriate, in the organization itself.

   Also, it will help to emphasize that **everyone** has difficulty maintaining a high level of self-worth at all times, and that it is normal to feel negative about oneself sometimes. The point is to help them feel positively about themselves just as often as they feel negatively, with the hope that they eventually will feel confident and worthy more often than not.

6. For homework, ask participants to record their feelings about their **own** levels of self-esteem and confidence in their journals. Reassure them that they will not be expected to share these entries

with the class, so that they will express more freely their true feelings. Also, ask them to think about how they could counter their negative feelings when these become too overwhelming (i.e., through a hobby, music, arts and crafts, writing poems, or stories, etc.).

7. Thank group members for participating in this difficult session. Inform them that the next class will cover ways to improve interactions by understanding and correctly interpreting others' facial expressions and body language.

Case study of Ryan

Several months ago, Ryan moved back to his parents' house, where his younger sister, Michele, and older brother, Tom, also lived. Ryan has been in the hospital two times in the past year and has experienced emotional problems most of his life. He was very reluctant to move back home because he has had trouble getting along with his family in the past; he did so only when everyone agreed to try to be more accepting of one another.

Ryan's parents expect him to get a job. They notice that he is hesitant to look for one, so they start reading through the papers and asking their friends if they know of any open positions. One night at dinner, the family is talking about Tom's plans for a summer job before leaving for college. Michele is very excited about it and says she cannot wait until she, too, can go to college. They tell Ryan that they have been looking around for jobs for him, and he gets very angry. While leaving the kitchen to go to his room, he yells, "What do you think I am -- some kind of child? I can get my own job when I want to, you know!"

After that night, Ryan becomes very depressed. He is having trouble getting out of bed in the morning and does not seem to have the energy to shower, let alone look for a job. Whenever his parents try to talk to him about it, he gets very angry because he still feels like they are treating him like a child. He notices that both Tom and Michele hardly talk to him and seem very angry at him. One day, he overhears his sister yelling at his mother for accepting Ryan's behavior in their household, and now the two of them are hardly speaking to each other. Ryan is quite upset by this and decides to tell his family over dinner that he is going to move back into his own apartment again.

Case study of Sheila

Sheila lives at home with her mother and two brothers. She has had emotional difficulties over the past five years. After her last hospitalization, she agreed to attend a vocational rehabilitation program. She did very well, quickly moved through the different placements, and recently obtained an independent job doing secretarial work at a large accounting firm in the city.

That night, she tells her family about her newest job, and they are thrilled. Her mother decides that they should all go out to dinner to celebrate. The entire conversation that night revolves around her success. Sheila is glad that her family is so happy for her but, for reasons that are not quite clear to her, their enthusiasm makes her anxious. When she meets with her case worker, Derrick, he also is excited by the news, and says to her, "Well, Sheila, this is the best

Case study of Sheila

(continued)

news I've heard in a long time! Before you know it, you won't be needing my help anymore!" At this comment, she feels even less excitement about her new job. She believes that the love and encouragement given to her by her family and case worker have helped her to come this far, and she does not want to disappoint them; however, she is frightened by what they seem to expect from her, as well as by the thought of somehow losing their support.

Case study of Juan

Juan began experiencing hallucinations to the extent that he would not leave his dormitory room. He was hospitalized for almost one month, and when he returned to school, he felt quite anxious because he wanted things to be like they were before he experienced these difficulties. For the first few weeks he was back in school, Juan tried to get involved in his old group's activities, but felt that they would rather not have him around. Several times, he called a few of his buddies to ask them to come over and shoot some baskets, but they always told him they had other plans. He felt like a loner and rarely spoke to anyone. His mother became aware that he no longer saw his old friends, but when she asked him about it Juan shrugged and answered, "They're all into different things now, and I just don't like being around them as much as I used to."

Juan decided to quit school and get a part-time job at a local factory. He became friends with some of his co-workers. Because they are several years older than Juan, his mother is not sure that she approves of his new friends. Juan, however, feels comfortable with them because they do not know about his past, and they always include him in their social activities.

Session 6: Improving Interactions by Understanding Others' Facial Expressions and Body Language

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Recognize that people communicate thoughts and feelings through facial expressions and body language;

2. Role play situations in which they communicate with facial expressions and body language;

3. Understand that some people tease others to make them feel comfortable or liked;

4. Recognize the difference between intentionally rude comments and harmless teasing.

Materials: 2 role play transparencies and accompanying handouts
2 handouts for each participant

Procedures:

1. Begin by reviewing the last session. Answer any questions that participants may have about how self-worth is developed and maintained. Again, praise them for the work they have done with you thus far.

2. Introduce this session with a discussion about communication through facial expressions and body language. Make sure the participants understand that what people **mean** to say can be determined by words, tone of voice, facial expressions, and body posture.

3. Demonstrate how feelings may be conveyed through tone of voice, by saying: "What are you -- some kind of nut?" The first time, say it in an angry tone of voice. The second time, say it as though you are kidding. The third time, say it with a certain amount of fear in your voice, as though you do not understand mental illness. After each statement, ask:

   a. Was I angry, kidding, or fearful?
   b. How did the tone of my voice show how I was feeling?

Ekman, P. & Friesen, W. (1975). Unmasking the face: A guide to recognizing emotions from facial clues. Prentice-Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.

H7 4. Pass out Handout 7, adapted from the book Unmasking the Face (Ekman & Friesen, 1975). Make sure the participants notice how each facial expression conveys a particular emotion. Choose a picture to imitate by matching a depicted facial expression to your tone of voice. For example, demonstrate the face expressing happiness by smiling in the same way and saying something joyful. Then, tell the participants to review carefully the handout, and ask volunteers to imitate some of the expressions the way you did. Ask them to save the handout in their folders.

5. Next, explain that body language also gives clues to how a person is feeling. Demonstrate this concept, by saying: "You can't do that!" The first time, say the words while taking a step backward and throwing your hands in the air to indicate that you are startled. The second time, say the words with your hands on your hips and your head tilted to show contempt. After each demonstration, ask:

   a. Was I surprised or scornful?
   b. How did my body movements indicate the emotion?

RP 6. Read the following descriptions of work situations aloud. Then, demonstrate the first one by role playing it with a volunteer, and ask volunteers to role play the second.

---

   a. Darlene is angry because her supervisor, Mr. Duke, said that she spends too much time daydreaming. A co-worker, Margot, approaches Darlene. Margot does not know that Mr. Duke has criticized Darlene's work habits. Margot notices that Darlene is staring out a window instead of working. Deciding to joke with Darlene, Margot walks over to her, smiles, and says with a wink, "Get back to work!" Darlene gets very angry. She whips around, points her finger at Margot, and says with a scowl on her face, "Don't you say that to me again!"

   b. Harold feels sad because a good friend at work, Lee, told him that he is going to move to another state in a month. As he is stacking boxes of crayons on a shelf, Harold accidentally knocks some jars of finger paint off the shelf, and they break all over the floor.

Lee is standing in the same aisle as Harold, and when he sees what has happened, he sucks in his breath, opens his eyes widely, and says in a startled tone of voice, "How did that happen?" With his shoulders slumped and his head down, Harold says dejectedly, "I wasn't watching what I was doing because I was thinking about you moving away."

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7. Afterwards, discuss how the volunteers used tone of voice, facial expression, and body language to convey emotion.

H8

8. Next, tell the group that another way people convey emotion is through teasing and joking. Since people sometimes use teasing as a mode of communication, it is important to recognize the difference between teasing and actual criticism. Tell the participants that many workers like to use joking as a way to make others feel comfortable and to laugh at themselves. They also may tease as a way to help others feel less stressed about a difficult situation. Some people joke as a way of complimenting either the person or the way he or she handles certain situations. To illustrate, pass out Handout 8, and read it aloud while the participants read silently. Afterwards, ask:

   a. Was Thelma serious when she said, "Shame on you!" to Joan?
   b. Why do you think that Joan took Thelma's remark seriously?
   c. Why do you think that Thelma was exasperated with Joan after telling the joke?
   d. How can you tell if someone is kidding you?
   e. If you are not sure why a co-worker thinks something is funny, how would you respond?

   Explain that the purpose of Thelma's teasing was to make Joan laugh at herself and feel comfortable about her yawn. Ask them to put this handout in their folders.

RP

9. Ask a volunteer to role play the following situation with you in order to provide an example of someone who uses kidding as a means of complimenting.

NEW WORKER: I've finished photocopying that memo and have distributed the copies to everyone.

CO-WORKER: Already? What are you trying to do -- set the world's record for the most memos mailed in a minute?

NEW WORKER: No, I'm just trying for the state record!

After the role playing, ask:

a. How was the co-worker kidding and complimenting at the same time?
b. How was the new worker's comment an appropriate reply to a kidding remark?

10. Reemphasize that there are various ways to tell whether someone is teasing. A person's tone of voice, facial expression, and body language provide clues to how that person is really feeling.

11. For homework, ask the participants to write descriptions of work situations in their journals that involved the non-verbal exchange of information, teasing, and joking with co-workers. Tell them to describe what happened, how they felt, and how they think others felt based on both facial expressions and body language. If there are participants who are not currently employed, instruct them to observe similar interactions with family or friends.

12. For the next session, ask the participants to find out where and when employees are allowed to smoke at work.

One way that you can tell the way another person is feeling is to look at the expression on that person's face. These are a few simple facial expression which may describe the way another person is feeling.

HAPPINESS

Happiness is probably the easiest face to identify. People will open their mouths and pull the corners of their mouth back at an upward angle, giving the appearance of a smile. You can also see small wrinkles at the corners of their eyes, sometimes called "crow's feet".

DISGUST

Disgust is another expression shown in the face. Usually the best indicator is the wrinkles over the nose as the upper lip is pulled up. The person's cheeks will also pull upward, which often makes the person's lower lip seem pushed forward.

Session 6, Handout 7

Adapted from Unmasking the Face, (Ekman & Friesen, 1979).

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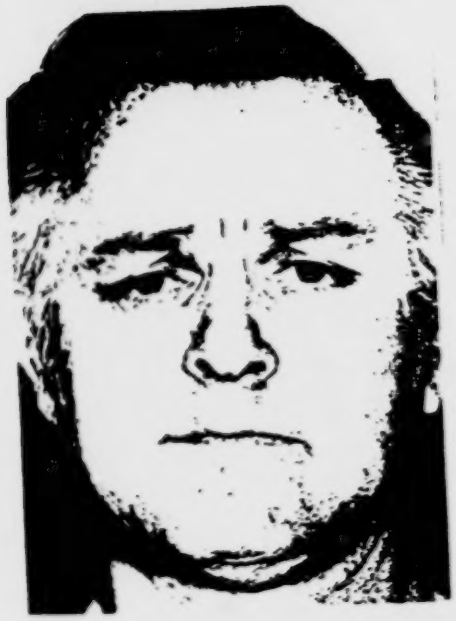


SADNESS

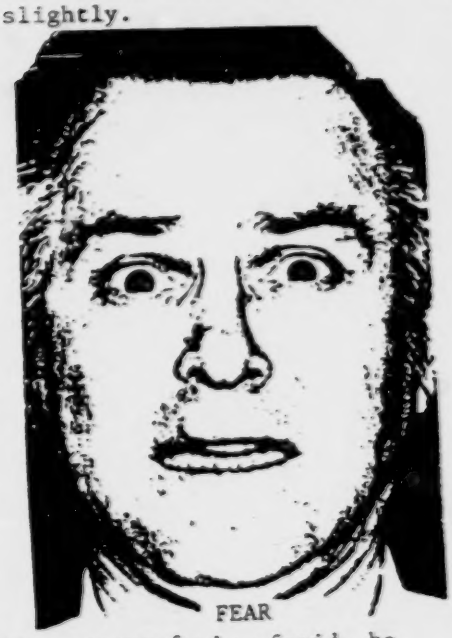
Sadness is also a facial expression easily identified. A person might draw his or her eyebrows together, with the corners over the nose slightly raised. He or she will also pull the corners of the mouth down, showing a frown.

ANGER

When someone is angry, they will draw their eyebrows together and pull them down, making their eyes seem very narrow. Usually, they clench their lips tightly tightly together, pulling the corners of their mouth back very slightly.

SURPRISE

During surprises, people's faces will move very quickly. Their eye brows might raise up in an arch-like fashion and will be raised very high. Their mouth might drop open and their eyes will be open very wide.



FEAR

When someone feels afraid, he or she might raise his or her eyebrows, but they will be straight rather than arched. Scemtimes, the eyebrows might seem drawn together at the middle, over the nose. The mouth usually is open, with the corners of the lips pulled straight

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Case Study of Joan

One morning before work, Joan is sitting at a table in her work station at the factory. A co-worker, Thelma, sits down next to her and begins a conversation.

Thelma says, "Well, another day, another dollar."

"Right," says Joan, yawning.

Thelma nudges Joan and laughs, "Shame on you! Tired already? Why, we haven't even started working yet."

Joan says apologetically, "I'm sorry. I don't want to give the wrong impression. I just started working here."

Thelma replies, "Lighten up. I was just kidding."

"Oh, I see," Joan says, a little embarrassed.

Thelma says brightly, "I know something that will put a smile on your face. Here's a joke for you. How do you keep a bull from charging?"

"I really don't know," Joan says, twisting uneasily on her stool.

"Rip up his credit card," Thelma laughs. She slams her hand down on the table. "Get it?"

Joan, feeling uncomfortable, replies, "Yeah."

Thelma's eyes roll up and her mouth twists to one side. "You're impossible, Joan. Get to work!"

Related questions:

1. Was Thelma serious when she said, "Shame on you!" to Joan?
2. Why do you think that Joan took Thelma's remark seriously?
3. Why do you think that Thelma was exasperated with Joan after telling the joke?
4. How can you tell if someone is kidding with you?
5. If you are not sure why a co-worker thinks something is funny, how would you respond?

Session 7: Smoking Etiquette in the Workplace

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Identify where and when employees are permitted to smoke in their respective places of employment;

2. List the effects of cigarette smoke on people who do not smoke;

3. Practice this etiquette by role playing work situations.

Materials: 2 role play transparencies and accompanying handouts
1 handout for each participant
Extra paper and pencils

Procedures:

1. Begin with a review of the last session by instructing the participants to share the work situations they described for homework by demonstrating what body language, gestures, or facial expressions they used in their interactions. Tell them to specify the emotions they think were expressed, and ask the other members of the group if they agree with the interpretations.

2. Ask the participants to list the **places** at work where employees are allowed to smoke. Then, ask each group member to state the **times during the day** that employees can smoke in these places.

3. Find out their beliefs about why smoking is allowed only in certain places and at certain times during work. Give examples, such as how cigarette smoking may be hazardous in some work areas (e.g., those containing combustible materials). Moreover, cigarette smoke can be very irritating to others because it causes watery eyes, itchy noses, headaches, and coughing.

   Point out that there is substantial evidence to prove that secondhand smoke is not only annoying, but is dangerous. It has been shown that in a smoke-filled, poorly-ventilated room, the carbon monoxide level in the blood doubles. Carbon monoxide is a gas found in tobacco smoke that actually poisons healthy red blood cells, thereby reducing the amount of oxygen carried in the blood stream. Lack of oxygen can narrow blood vessels, which can lead to heart attacks or strokes. Also, carbon monoxide causes shortness of breath in people with chronic lung disease.

RP 4. Tell the participants that because smoking can be a nuisance and a hazard to others, it is important for them to observe etiquette by smoking only in the areas where it is allowed. If they are allowed to smoke in an area with individuals who do not smoke (such as a lounge or cafeteria), they **always** must ask if this will bother others in the area. To illustrate, ask a volunteer to role play the following situation with you:

NEW WORKER: Excuse me, do you mind if I smoke?

CO-WORKER: To be honest, I really do. Smoke makes me cough and my eyes water.

NEW WORKER: I'd really like to have a cigarette right now. What should I do?

CO-WORKER: You could go into the smoking section of the cafeteria. There usually aren't too many people there at this time.

NEW WORKER: Okay, thanks for the tip.

Afterward, ask:

a. Why do you think it is important to ask co-workers if they mind if you smoke?
b. How might your social relationships with co-workers be affected if you smoke without asking if they mind?
c. What might a non-smoker do if a co-worker lights up without asking if it is a problem?

RP 5. Ask a volunteer to role play the following conversation with you in order to demonstrate how to request someone who is not using smoking etiquette to be more considerate.

CO-WORKER: Boy, have I had a long day! It's time for a cigarette break. (lights up)

NEW WORKER: Excuse me, but cigarette smoke really bothers me. Would you mind putting out your cigarette or smoking somewhere else?

CO-WORKER: No way! I have a right to smoke.

NEW WORKER: That's true. But I also have a right to protect my health. So, please, put out your cigarette or smoke somewhere else.

CO-WORKER: All right, all right. What are you one of those no-smoking activists?

NEW WORKER: No, it's just that cigarette smoke makes me feel sick, and I would appreciate it if you did it somewhere else.

H9

6. Pass out Handout 9, which gives another example of smoking etiquette. Read it aloud as the participants read along with you. Afterward, ask:

   a. What did Gil do with his cigarette that bothered his friends?
   b. What general rules of etiquette can you make up after reading about Gil?

   Ask the participants to put this handout in their folders.

7. Tell the group that, even when other people say that they do not mind smoking, it is still important for them to keep the smoke away from others' faces and to watch where the ashes go. Then, ask volunteers to make up and role play a work situation in which an individual observes smoking etiquette. After the role play, ask the others to point out ways that these people complied with smoking etiquette.

8. Inform the group that the next session will introduce methods to resist the temptation to smoke, either to quit entirely or because smoking is not allowed in certain areas. Ask participants who have quit smoking to think about the times when they are most tempted to smoke again.

   Also, ask the participants who smoke to think about the conditions under which they are most likely to smoke (e.g., when stressed, angry, out with friends, etc.). Ask the participants who have never smoked to think about what they **believe** would trigger the need for cigarettes. Ask the group to write about this in their journals and to bring these entries to the next session.

Case Study of Gil

Gil is sitting at the lunch table with two of his co-workers, Chris and Mike. All three have just finished their lunches, and Gil is ready to light up a cigarette.

He takes one out of his pack, looks at Chris and Mike, and asks, "Do you mind if I smoke?"

Both Chris and Mike say that it is not a problem.

Gil strikes a match and lights up. He takes a puff and puts the burning cigarette in an ashtray right in front of Mike. The smoke drifts across Mike's face, and he begins to cough.

"I don't mind if you smoke, Gil," Mike replies, "But I do mind if the smoke blows in my face."

"Oops! Sorry, Mike," says Gil. "I wasn't watching what I was doing."

Gil then gets into a conversation with Chris and Mike about the Monday night football game. At one point, he gets very excited about a fifty-two yard field goal and begins to flick his ashes on the table instead of into the ashtray.

Chris says, "Gil, could you please be more careful about where you put your ashes?"

Gil excuses the mess and wipes up the ashes.

About five minutes before he returns to work, Chris gets a candy bar from the vending machine. As he starts to eat it, he notices that Gil has lit up another cigarette.

"Gil, I usually don't mind if you smoke, but when I'm eating I don't like to breath in smoke." says Chris. "Could you put out your cigarette?"

"Sure, Chris," replies Gil. "Glad you mentioned it."

Related questions:

1. What did Gil do with his cigarette that bothered his friends?
2. What general rules of etiquette can you make up after reading about Gil?

Session 7, Handout 9

Session 8: Resisting the Temptation to Smoke

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Understand that people who have quit smoking may encounter the temptation to begin again, especially while at work;

2. Learn techniques to help them resist smoking, either because they do not want to smoke or because they are not allowed to smoke.

Materials: 1 role play transparency and accompanying handout
1 handout for each participant

Procedure:

1. Review the last session by reminding the group of the importance of smoking etiquette. Ask them whether or not they were able to observe this etiquette while smoking at work. Start this session by asking participants to take out their journal entries about situations that trigger the desire or need to smoke cigarettes.

2. Involve the participants who smoke by telling them that they will be able to use the techniques you are about to discuss when tempted to smoke in an area at work where it is not permitted. Explain to the participants who have never smoked that this discussion will be helpful to them in order to understand what people go through when trying to resist smoking, no matter what the reason.

3. Now explain to the group that people who have quit smoking may encounter the temptation to start smoking again while at work, especially if many of their co-workers smoke. Moreover, the stressors encountered while at work may trigger the need or desire to have a cigarette. Point out that people who have recently given up smoking may have added difficulty coping with stress due to the withdrawal symptoms associated with quitting. Some examples of these symptoms are nervousness, irritability, and mood swings.

4. Tell the group that the following techniques can help workers avoid smoking:

H10

   a. A chart recording exactly where they are, who they are with, what they are feeling, what they are doing, why they are doing it, and the time of day will help them discover under what circumstances they have the urge to smoke.

Explain that Handout 10 is an example of such a chart. If there is not enough room on the chart to describe their situations, tell them to use their journals instead.

Point out that keeping track of what is going on when they are tempted to smoke is an important first step in dealing with the temptation.

b. Regular physical exercise also helps to reduce the need for cigarettes. At work, exercise is best done during coffee or lunch breaks. Walking for fifteen to twenty minutes after lunch helps to fight the urge for a cigarette after eating. In addition, exercise eases the stress and depression that often trigger the urge for cigarettes. Finally, regular exercise helps to control weight gain experienced by some persons who have quit smoking.

c. Quick deep-breathing exercises also are useful when fighting the urge for cigarettes. Suggest that they do this exercise in private (e.g., the washroom). Lead the group through the following deep-breathing exercise:

1. Inhale as deeply as possible.
2. Hold in your breath for two seconds.
3. Slightly tip up your chin, form your mouth into an "o" shape, and blow the air out with great force. Tighten your stomach muscles to make sure all the air is expelled.
4. Repeat the exercise three or four times.

Point out that the deep-breathing exercise is a good, instant remedy for cigarette craving, which according to recent studies, lasts about five minutes. Because this exercise is an effective way to curtail the urge for both people who smoke and those who have quit, write these steps on the board, and ask participants to copy them into their journals. You also should put them into the form of a handout to be saved in their folders.

RP d. Assertive statements are useful when refusing a cigarette during the work day. Demonstrate this technique by asking two volunteers to role play the following situation:

CO-WORKER: You sure you don't want a cigarette?

NEW WORKER: No, thanks.

CO-WORKER: Come on, take one!

NEW WORKER: Sorry, but I stopped smoking and I don't want to start again. Please help me out by not offering me a cigarette again.

CO-WORKER: Oh, okay, I'm sorry about that!

NEW WORKER: It's okay. After all, you didn't know.

Point out that, when making assertive statements, it is important to look the other person straight in the eye and to speak with conviction, while avoiding rudeness.

5. Ask the group to suggest methods that they use to resist smoking that were not mentioned in this session.

6. For homework, encourage group members to record diligently on their charts situations which trigger the need for cigarettes during the next two weeks. Tell them that it may take at least two weeks for an obvious pattern of need to emerge.

7. Inform the group that the next two sessions will deal with increasing responsibility at work, as well as when and how to ask for a raise. Ask them to find out from co-workers whether or not there are pay-raise schedules at their places of employment, and, if possible, how other employees go about obtaining their raises. Instruct them to write whether raises are appropriate for the type of work they do, based on this information.

CIRCUMSTANCES THAT TRIGGER THE URGE TO SMOKE

	When?	Where?	What Happened?	With Whom?	What Feelings?
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					
13.					
14.					
15.					
16.					
17.					
18.					
19.					
20.					

Session 8, Handout 10

Session 9: Assessing the Appropriateness of a Raise or Extra Benefits

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Discuss whether a raise or extra benefits are appropriate for the types of work they do, as well as how likely they are to get either;

2. List the steps necessary when requesting a raise or negotiating for extra benefits.

Materials: 1 handout for each participant

Procedures:

1. Remind the group that they should continue to record the situations that trigger their urges for cigarettes, since they will be asked to discuss their findings in the next session. Also, find out if anyone has tried physical activity or deep-breathing exercises and whether or not these were helpful in curbing his or her urges for cigarettes.

2. Then, ask the participants if they were able to find out whether their employers have pay-raise schedules. Explain that if such a schedule exists it will be very difficult for employees to negotiate raises. The schedule sets salary ranges for the various positions in a company. As long as a worker occupies a particular position, he or she stands little chance of getting any more money than the schedule for that position indicates. However, the worker may negotiate for some extra benefits, such as flex-time, instead of a raise. If their businesses do not have pay-raise schedules, they will have more of a chance to negotiate raises or extra benefits.

3. Ask **each** participant whether or not his or her place of employment has a pay-raise schedule. If the participants are not sure, ask them to relate what they wrote in their journals about the experiences of other employees seeking raises. These incidents might provide clues as to the possibilities of actually securing a raise.

4. Inform the group that it is likely, and sometimes **appropriate**, that their job tasks will increase even though money or benefits will not. Often, the level of one's job

responsibilities is commensurate with his or her capabilities. Therefore, the more capable a worker, the more job tasks he or she will be given, regardless of salary.

H11

5. Now, ask the participants to think about their jobs and whether or not they can truly expect or ask for a raise -- even if their job responsibilities have increased beyond the level at which they were hired. Pass out Handout 11, which should help clarify under what circumstances they can reasonably expect a raise in pay or benefits. Instruct them to save this handout in their folders.

6. Once they are clear on the distinction between wanting a raise and deserving a raise, ask the participants if they would negotiate for a raise or extra benefits within the next six months or one year. If there are individuals who think that they will not get a raise -- either because of a pay-raise schedule or because job tasks increased while the salary will not -- include them by telling them that this discussion will come in handy if they get another job at which they can expect a raise. Record the names of the participants who can reasonably request a raise, as well as the reasons why, to use in the next session. Ask group members to copy this list, and to bring it to the next class.

   If there are no participants in the group who can expect a raise at this time, create fictional characters based on those in Handout 11, and discuss the work situations of these characters.

7. Instruct the participants who are planning to ask for raises to specify how much they will request. Ask the other participants if they think this amount is reasonable, given the length of time the requesting employees have been on the job and the type of work being done. If they want extra benefits, ask them to specify exactly what they want. Again, discuss whether or not they have reasonable expectations.

8. Close this session by asking the group to think about the ways in which they could go about requesting a raise or benefits. Ask them to list in their journals at least 3 ways they could approach their supervisors with

their requests. If there are group members who have decided that a raise is not appropriate at this time, ask them to base their strategies on another group member's job. If nobody in the group can expect a raise, tell them to create their strategies based on the characters from Handout 11 who can reasonably expect raises.

9. Ask them to bring their journal entries to the next session, as you will be discussing methods of approaching supervisors when asking for a raise or extra benefits.

Who Can Expect a Raise or Extra Benefits

Decide whether or not the following employees can reasonably expect a raise or extra benefits.

1. Myrna has been working in a office as a receptionist for six months. She is very good at operating the large, complicated switch board, and she rarely makes mistakes when either putting calls through to or taking messages for other employees. Her efficiency has not gone unnoticed, and her supervisor recently decided that she could handle scheduling some appointments for the other employees as well. Should Myrna ask for a raise or extra benefits because of this?

2. Yutaka is working as a janitor at a warehouse in the city. During the six weeks that he has been working, he has become friends with another janitor in the building, who has been at the warehouse for two years. One day, he offers to take Yutaka out to lunch. As his friend is pulling out money to pay for lunch, Yutaka notices his paycheck, which had fallen onto the counter. He sees that his friend makes much more than he does and feels jealous. Is it appropriate for him to request a raise?

3. For about six months, Alicia has been working at a local theatre doing all kinds of jobs, including running errands, ushering, cleaning up, and selling tickets. All the other staff members, as well as the actors and actresses, count on her to get her work done quickly and efficiently. She knows that other maintenance staff are being hired at much higher rates of pay than she receives. She feels she deserves a reasonably good raise. Is she correct in going to her boss with this request?

4. Joseph is doing clerical work at an accounting firm in his neighborhood where he fills out forms and enters data into the computer. He does this very well, so his boss has decided that he also can prepare mailings as part of his weekly responsibilities. Is it reasonable for him to expect a raise?

5. Doreen has been working at a small grocery store in the city for three years. She lives in the suburbs, and it takes her thirty minutes to get to work every day. She is responsible for stocking shelves and taking inventory. Her boss has decided that, rather than hire another person, Doreen also must bag groceries when they are busy. She is not sure how she will be able to keep up with stock and do this new task. Should she tell her boss that she deserves a raise or extra benefits?

Session 9, Handout 11

Answer key: 1. no 2. no 3. yes 4. no 5. yes

Session 10: Requesting a Raise or Extra Benefits

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Discuss various strategies to use when asking for a raise or extra benefits;

2. Role play situations in which an employee requests a raise or extra benefits from a supervisor.

Materials: The list of participants made in Session 9
3 role play transparencies and accompanying handouts
Extra paper and pencils

Procedures:

1. Ask the participants to take out their charts about what triggers their need for cigarettes. Assess whether any noticeable patterns have emerged and whether they will be able to use this information to curtail their urges to smoke.

2. Begin this session by identifying the group members who have decided that they deserved a raise or extra benefits and the reasons why their requests are legitimate.

3. Explain to the group that some businesses schedule raise discussion meetings between an employee and supervisor. In other cases, a worker may need to request a meeting with his or her supervisor to discuss the possibility of a raise. If the employee would like to discuss a raise and has not been approached by the supervisor, it is not inappropriate to ask to schedule a raise interview. It is usually best to have the raise interview before other co-workers in order to obtain "an edge." Also, a supervisor needs some time to think about the request, as well as to bring it up with his or her own supervisor. Therefore, the workers are wise to make their requests early.

4. At a meeting to discuss the issue of a raise, the employee and supervisor will talk about the reasons why the worker deserves a raise and whether or not a salary increase is

possible given the company's policy and/or budget.

5. Point out that there are several strategies that will be helpful in the raise interview itself. Help the participants acknowledge that there is a real possibility that they will be refused and that this rejection also might be upsetting. Furthermore, they may be unsure that they can effectively utilize the strategies you are about to discuss and may fear that they will forget to mention their most important accomplishments.

   Reassure them that by practicing what they are going to say in their interviews, both in class and at home, they will have more confidence when they have the real interview. Also, if they do not receive the requested raise, there will be other opportunities to try again. Most importantly, if they are turned down, they should still maintain positive attitudes about their jobs and continue to educate their bosses about their own job strengths and capabilities. This will be important for good references, even if they never get their raises.

6. Tell them that once they have an idea of what they deserve in terms of a raise, they must formulate strategies for approaching their supervisors. Explain that one of the first things to do is to figure out how their supervisors view them as workers. Prompt the group members to discuss how often they are praised or criticized by their supervisors, how much the supervisors take them for granted, as well as the extent to which the supervisors know what they do and how well they do it. Emphasize that the participants must give **specific** examples to support their opinions about their supervisors.

   Furthermore, review the communication techniques from Session 4, and remind the participants to use these whenever speaking to their supervisors.

RP 7. Point out that, after deciding how their supervisors view them, the next step is to decide on a strategy to use in their negotiations. Some participants may suggest

that they can threaten to quit if they do not receive a raise or extra benefits. Explain that this is **not** a good tactic because a worker usually cannot withstand the loss of a job or a good reference upon leaving, and advise them against using this strategy.

Tell the participants that one of the best strategies is for them to **educate the supervisor** about what they do and how well they do it. Ask two participants to demonstrate this strategy through the following role play. Explain that the employee is casually illustrating the work he or she has recently accomplished.

WORKER: Do you want to hear something funny, Ms. Tarbet? Remember about two weeks ago when you heard some employees talking about how many extra items we had to put on the shelves for the holiday season? We were worried about whether or not we would be able to keep up with the work.

SUPERVISOR: Yes, I do remember.

WORKER: Well, this week we had to stock even more items on the shelves, and we did it in less time than we did two weeks ago! I don't know, but maybe it helped when I told the workers to spend less time worrying and more time working.

SUPERVISOR: Way to go, Roger! I didn't realize that your team is so speedy and that you are a boost to the team spirit.

WORKER: Thanks, Ms. Tarbet. We'll keep plugging away.

Convey that educating the supervisor about what they do and how well they do it will show that they have a sense of what they are worth. Emphasize that it is best to be casual when educating the supervisor -- boasting is to be avoided. Then, ask the group to think about and list some of their job strengthens or situations in which they were particularly helpful and responsible. Prompt them with examples of such behavior.

RP

8. If their supervisors appear resistant to the idea of a salary increase or extra benefits, explain that there are other strategies that they can use during the raise interview. The first of these strategies is to **reflect back** the supervisor's objections to the raise. This involves repeating the supervisor's objections in a slightly different way in order to lead supervisors to answer their own objections. Instruct the group members to identify the supervisor's objection, rephrase it slightly, and repeat it to the supervisor in the form of a polite question. Illustrate this strategy by asking two volunteers to role play the following situation:

WORKER: Within the past few months I have received a few more responsibilities which include ordering all the magazines and teaching other workers how to stock the magazine rack correctly. I also have encouraged co-workers to straighten the magazines when they have extra time. This makes it look nicer and easier for our customers to find what they need. I have even special-ordered a few magazines for some of our regular customers.

SUPERVISOR: Hmm. . .that's interesting. And how is this working out?

WORKER: So far, things have gone smoothly. All the magazines that we sell have been readily available to our customers. If supplies run low, I always restock. I have even noticed more people coming up to the rack, now that it is in better shape. In the coming months, I plan to have things running even more smoothly by ordering magazines earlier, eliminating some magazines that are not big sellers, and adding others that are selling well. I know that one of your goals is to run the magazine section more efficiently, and I hope I can help you accomplish this goal.

SUPERVISOR: I'm glad to hear that I have your support!

WORKER: I would like to add that in the light of what I have said, I feel that I deserve a raise.

SUPERVISOR: Believe me, I couldn't agree with you more. But what can I do? My hands are tied. The economy is getting worse, and the company has to be very careful in planning its budget.

(Point out that this is the objection.)

WORKER: So the budget is fairly rigid and can't allow allow for changes?

(Point out that this is the reflect-back technique.)

SUPERVISOR: I wouldn't say it couldn't be changed under any circumstances.

WORKER: Then the budget could be modified if there were good reasons to do this?

(Again, this is the reflect-back technique)

SUPERVISOR: Certainly.

WORKER: Well, my situation has changed, and I think that this is a good reason to raise my salary.

SUPERVISOR: Let me mull it over, and I'll meet with you next week.

WORKER: Thank you. I'll be looking forward to it.

Point out that the worker made the case for a raise, and then, reflected back the supervisor's objections in a polite but firm manner. Help group members to think about times at work they could have successfully used this strategy.

RP 9. **Tell the group that another technique is to provide their supervisors with <u>support</u>. Sometimes, supervisors have a need to "talk shop," and it is important for the worker to give them an opportunity to do so. Explain that their supervisors may sound as though they are trying to stall for time or change the subject, when they really just want to chat about the company. For example, a supervisor may want to talk about an enjoyable part of the company's work that he or she used to do.**

Workers must understand that their bosses have needs and they, as employees, should be sensitive to them. By engaging in friendly conversations with their supervisors, the workers will increase their supervisors' receptivity to a raise. Ask two participants to role play the following situation in which this idea is illustrated:

WORKER: I think I should get a raise because new workers in the mailroom are being hired in at a much higher salary.

SUPERVISOR: You know, when I first started working here, I used to sort mail. Talk about responsibilities! We didn't have the sorting system we have now, and people complained about getting their mail late. What a mess!

WORKER: Thank goodness for the new system.

SUPERVISOR: You wouldn't believe what happened one day. A clerk got a birthday card six months after his birthday because it had been slipped into a pigeon-hole that no one used.

WORKER: That was quite an oversight!

SUPERVISOR: Well, it's been nice talking to you, and we'll see about your raise.

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10. For homework, ask the group to write in their journals about opportunities they have had with supervisors to discuss their strengthens and abilities.

11. Inform them that the next session will cover how to get along well with their supervisors. Instruct them to write about any incidents in which a supervisor has not communicated well with workers or has not made appropriate decisions. If there are group members who are not working, ask them to think about previous work situations in which this was the case.

Session 11: Getting Along With the Supervisor

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Discuss the characteristics of different types of supervisors;

2. Understand that employees develop good working relationships with their supervisors based on their knowledge of various personality traits;

3. Role play ways to get along with their supervisors based on personality types.

Materials: 5 role play transparencies and accompanying handouts
1 handout for each participant

Procedures:

1. Begin by asking the group to share their journal entries describing opportunities they have had to educate their supervisors about their abilities. Request that they explain exactly what they said, how they said it, and how their supervisors responded. Discuss whether or not the members of the group handled their situations appropriately.

2. Then, ask the participants to talk about their journal entries that describe supervisors' failures to communicate well or to make appropriate decisions.

H11

3. Explain that one of the best ways to develop a good working relationship with one's supervisor is to cultivate an understanding of that individual's personality and to interact with him or her based on this understanding. In other words, by knowing the supervisor's personality type, the employee will better comprehend the decisions that he or she makes, as well as the way he or she chooses to execute these decisions. This knowledge also will help them to more effectively negotiate conflicts if and when they arise. Handout 11 is a summary of the following personality types and will be a handy reference for individuals seeking a better understanding of their supervisors. Tell them to save this summary in their folders.

   The following are examples of different types of bosses. Convey to the participants that

their supervisors will be characterized by more than one type of personality. Thus, they should relate to their supervisors according to the personality features displayed **at the time of the interaction.**

RP a). Some bosses are very ambitious and mostly interested in obtaining a higher position in the company. Supervisors who fall into this category are often concerned about what their employees can do to help them look good or move up in the company. Often times, they want everything produced by the department to be a reflection of their abilities as supervisors. Usually, this type of person is not receptive to conversations about employees' personal lives, so workers should not discuss their personal situations unless the supervisor does so first. Point out that because this type of person likes to be in control, he or she needs to make all the decisions or solve all the problems; therefore, as much as possible, employees ought to carry out the supervisor's work-related decisions, if they are fair and reasonable.

Explain to the group that they can find out if they have bosses like this by asking other employees how their supervisors got to their current positions. Also, tell them to observe whether or not their bosses avoid personal conversations, and insist on making all the decisions. Emphasize that they should do the investigating in a **casual** way before work, during breaks, or after work. To illustrate this point, ask two participants to role play the following conversation:

CO-WORKER: How are you getting along with Ms. Mills?

NEW WORKER: Okay, so far.

CO-WORKER: She's been a supervisor for only a year.

NEW WORKER: What did she do before she got her current position?

CO-WORKER: She supervised just a portion of the department. You know, she told a number of the people who worked for her that she wanted to move up in the company. She said that she wanted to be a Department Supervisor within one year and an Assistant Vice President in five years. With her determination, she just might make it.

NEW WORKER: I think you're right.

RP b). Some supervisors need a lot of support for their plans and decisions.

Often times, supervisors need a lot of support, especially when trying to meet deadlines or to complete certain work. If their supervisors make it clear that they need help finishing some work, the participants ought to lend as much help as possible, even if the work is not part of their regular responsibilities. Make them aware that even bosses who do not regularly delegate job tasks will fall into this category at one time or another.

Explain to them that it is not always easy to support the supervisor; nevertheless, it is a good practice if they believe that their supervisors are being reasonable and fair. Sometimes, supervisors will make decisions based on inadequate knowledge because it is very difficult to be on top of everything that goes on in a department. This type of poor decision-making, usually due to poor communication, can make it hard to be supportive. If this occurs, it is important to help set the facts straight without making the supervisors look foolish. It also is a good idea to ask for their guidance or advice when resolving a problem or conflict of this nature. Ask two participants to role play the following situation to demonstrate how to be supportive of a supervisor in this way:

SUPERVISOR: I am glad that we will have all the new mailing out by the end of the day! Because of this, I just told the Director to expect responses by the end of the week. This made her very happy!

NEW WORKER: I was hoping we could have them out by then, but a problem just cropped up. A moment ago, I walked by the proof reader's office, and he said that he had discovered several incorrect dates in the text. What do you suggest?

SUPERVISOR: Oh. Well, we'll have to have them reprinted, which means moving the mailing date to next week. I'll have to tell the Director right now. Thanks for telling me about the problem.

NEW WORKER: You're welcome! I'll get started on the re-prints.

SUPERVISOR: Thank you.

RP c). Some supervisors mostly are concerned with pleasing their employees.

Of course, most people would like to work for a boss who is supportive of and concerned about his or her employees. It is much easier to work for and with this type of person, as long as they can balance their ability to please with constructive criticism and advice (see point e. below for further discussion of supervisors who create this type of balance).

There are supervisors who cannot create this balance and are interested **mainly** in making sure that they are liked by others. Most likely, this type of supervisor will avoid being critical even if criticism would be constructive or necessary in helping employees learn how to work more efficiently. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult to learn from this type of boss in terms of job skills or techniques. Generally speaking, in order to learn their job tasks, employees often will need to go to co-workers rather than to this type of supervisor.

Suggest that it is best not to dump problems on such supervisors, since they are slow to admit that things are not running smoothly. This type of person may be reluctant to lay blame on any individual or group of individuals for fear of jeopardizing personal relationships.

A good way for participants to find out whether their supervisors seek to please employees at the expense of giving constructive criticism or advice is to observe what the boss says and does when interacting with co-workers. If he or she compliments too frequently, avoids making tough decisions or difficult interactions with employees, and shies away from talking about problems, the supervisor is probably foregoing constructive advice at the expense of pleasing everyone. Point out that to establish a good working relationship with this type of supervisor, workers ought to greet him or her, be friendly, avoid talking about work **problems** unless asked to do so, and show an interest in the personal details he or she reveals. To illustrate this point, ask volunteers to role play the following situation:

SUPERVISOR: Good morning, (name of participant). How's it going today?

NEW WORKER: Good morning, (name of participant). I'm doing fine. How are you?

SUPERVISOR: I feel great! I finally got an uninterrupted night's sleep. My baby is sleeping now from 10:00 at night to 6:00 in the morning.

NEW WORKER: I'm glad to hear that. I remember you said that she used to wake you up at 2:00 and 4:30 in the morning.

SUPERVISOR: How well I remember. You certainly have a good memory!

NEW WORKER: Thanks. Maybe I can put it to good use on the job.

SUPERVISOR: (Laughing.) I'll bet you can. Have a good day!

NEW WORKER: You too!

RP d). Some bosses make very little contact with workers.

This type of boss is distant from employees and is caught up in the problems of the day. Most likely, he or she does not want to engage in conversations about personal situations unless it is absolutely necessary. Supervisors of this type are satisfied when their employees are working hard and being extremely productive. Convey that employees should not take the behavior of a distant supervisor personally. The supervisor's non-communicative nature is not necessarily a reflection of the work done by his or her employees; they should not take this behavior to heart.

Explain to the group that they can be fairly certain they work for this type of supervisor if he or she rarely steps out of the office and hardly ever does more than greet people or talk business. Tell them that the best way to get along with a boss like this is to return greetings and to keep conversations short and business-like. Point out that, with this type of supervisor, it may be necessary to learn the job from co-workers because the boss leaves the employees to their own devices.

Ask two volunteers to role play the following conversation to show how to get along with a boss who is distant from workers:

SUPERVISOR: Hello, (name of participant).

NEW WORKER: Hello, (name of participant).

SUPERVISOR: Have all the tables been set?

NEW WORKER: All taken care of.

SUPERVISOR: Glad to hear it! Now, back to work.

NEW WORKER: Right. Back to it.

RP e). Some bosses are interested in developing good personal relationships with employees while simultaneously carrying out the goals of the company.

As was mentioned previously, it is easiest and most satisfying to work with a supportive supervisor. Moreover, the employees have the potential to gain more if they enjoy the job while learning new skills.

The participants can tell whether they have this type of boss if he or she gives and accepts constructive criticism, welcomes questions and suggestions from employees, gives reasons why certain decisions are made, and regularly asks employees how they are doing. He or she also will encourage employees to take initiative if it is appropriate to do so. Suggest that developing a good relationship with this type of person is much easier than with other types. To illustrate this point, ask two volunteers to role play the following conversation:

SUPERVISOR: Good morning, (name of participant). I hope you're doing better today. I noticed that you seemed to be having a bad day yesterday.

NEW WORKER: It's nice of you to ask! I am feeling much better today and am glad you're here because I have a proposal to make. I've noticed that during rush hour it takes too long for the burgers to get served to customers. How about if we have one person cook the burgers and another person put them on the buns?

SUPERVISOR: I like it. Let me think it over. Thanks!

NEW WORKER: Anytime.

---

4. For homework, instruct the group to think about how their supervisors fit into the characterizations just discussed. Be sure to point out that their bosses most likely will be described by more than one of these characterizations. Tell them that supervisors may show different personality characteristics

depending upon the type of work involved. For example, a supervisor may be very controlling about a project he is doing for **his** boss but may welcome suggestions and input about routine workplace procedures. Similarly, a supervisor may be reluctant to criticize her employees' work when they help her by putting in overtime on a project, but **will** give negative feedback when the tasks are part of daily job responsibilities. After helping them reflect on the personalities their supervisors display, ask group members to write about how they plan to interact with their supervisors based on these new perspectives.

5. Tell them that the next session will discuss conflicts with supervisors. Ask them to think about conflicts that have arisen at work, particularly conflicts that they found difficult to resolve. Instruct those individuals who are not currently employed to think about previous work experiences in which this occurred.

Summary of Personality Types

The following are examples of different types of supervisors, based on personality traits. Remember that people may be characterized by more than one of these descriptions. Relate to them based on the personality trait you perceive at the time of the interaction.

1). **Some supervisors are very ambitious and mostly interested in obtaining a higher position in the company.**

Because this type of person is primarily interested in obtaining a higher position in the company, he or she wants the work done in the department to be a reflection of his or her ability as a supervisor. It is important to talk business with a boss like this -- avoid discussing your personal life. You also should try to carry out all of his or her work-related decisions, if they are fair and reasonable, to the best of your abilities. Find out if your boss is like this by asking other employees how your supervisor got to his or her current position. If he or she avoids personal conversations and insists on making all the decisions, it is likely that he or she falls into this category.

2). **Some supervisors need a lot of support for their plans and decisions.**

Often times, supervisors need a lot of support, especially when trying to meet deadlines or to complete certain work. If your supervisor needs help in completing a task, try to lend as much support as possible, while still meeting your own deadlines.

Even bosses who normally do not delegate a good deal of their own work will fall into this category at one time or another.

3). **Some supervisors are concerned mostly with pleasing their employees, even at the expense of giving good advice or needed criticism.**

It may be difficult to learn from this type of person since you will not always be sure if you are doing your job correctly. If your boss is the type who does not offer advice or constructive criticism, you will have to learn many of your job tasks from co-workers. Also, avoid discussing problems with this kind of boss unless absolutely necessary, because he or she would rather think that things are running smoothly.

Find out if you work for this type of supervisor by observing what he or she says and does when interacting with co-workers. If your supervisor compliments too much, avoids making tough decisions or difficult interactions with employees, and shies away from talking about problems, he or she is most likely

Summary of Personality Types

(continued)

interested in pleasing other people at the expense of giving needed advice and criticism.

4.) **Some bosses make very little contact with workers.**

A supervisor like this is distant from employees and usually is caught up in the problems of the day. Moreover, he or she rarely engages in personal conversations. Do not take the behavior of someone like this personally because he or she will most likely behave in this manner no matter how well you do your job.

It is likely that you work for this type of boss if he or she rarely comes out of the office and hardly ever does more than greet people or talk business. Keep conversations with him or her business-like and to the point.

5.) **Some bosses are interested in developing good personal relationships with employees while simultaneously carrying out the goals of the company.**

It is often easiest and most satisfying to work with this type of person. In this case, you can learn many new skills while enjoying your job.

This type of boss gives and receives constructive criticism, welcomes questions and suggestions from employees, gives reasons why certain decisions were made, and often asks the employees how they are doing.

Session 12: Resolving Conflicts with the Supervisor

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Discuss how to handle conflicts with their supervisors;

2. Role play situations in which they resolve conflicts with their supervisors.

Materials: 2 role play transparencies and accompanying handouts
2 handouts for each participant

Procedures:

1. Begin by asking the group whether or not they were able to characterize their supervisors based on the descriptions given in the last session. Answer any questions they might have about where, if at all, their bosses fit into the given personality types. Find out whether or not an understanding of the characterizations helped to improve interactions with supervisors. If they came up with personality types in addition to the ones previously discussed, incorporate them into future sessions.

   Then, ask them to recall past conflict they have had with supervisors.

2. Tell group members that it is not uncommon to have problems or conflicts with supervisors. Sometimes, bosses make demands that are either very difficult to accomplish or are actually impossible. The participants must learn how to discern between a request that is difficult but manageable and one that is unreasonable. For instance, if they have some free time at work because they are meeting their deadlines efficiently, their bosses may assign them some extra work. Clearly, this may be difficult, but would not be unreasonable. However, if their supervisors increase their job tasks to the point where they have too much work to meet their set deadlines, then their supervisor has made an unreasonable request.

H12

3. Inform the participants that it is common for employees to disagree with the supervisor's decisions and that this occasionally leads to conflict. Sometimes, workers will just have to accept certain decisions, whether or not they agree. Point out that although employees might disagree with their supervisors, it may

not always be wise to voice objections. However, there may be times when it is appropriate to discuss their disagreements with their supervisors. These instances include: situations in which the workers have been misrepresented; situations that are unfair and may possibly be brought up again if not resolved; and situations in which there is still time and reason to reverse the decision.

Handout 12 will help prompt discussion about under what circumstances it is appropriate to express dissatisfaction with a supervisor's decisions or requests. Make sure to discuss **why** it is appropriate or inappropriate to challenge the decision in each case.

Remind them to save this handout.

RP 4. After going over the handout, ask volunteers to role play the following situation in order to show how to express disagreement with a supervisor's decision:

NEW WORKER: Good afternoon, (participant's name). I've made this appointment with you because I'd like to tell you why I'm favor of purchasing a new photocopier, even though you have decided not to buy one. I think that in the long-run a new machine will help to improve the communication of information.

SUPERVISOR: Why do you say that?

NEW WORKER: The machine we have now is very inefficient. It breaks down constantly and produces copies very slowly. There's always a backlog of paperwork that needs to be photocopied. If we purchase a new machine, we could send out letters to customers more quickly and distribute memos to employees faster.

SUPERVISOR: Thanks for the input, (name of participant). I'll think about it.

NEW WORKER: Thank you.

H13 5. Employees also may encounter the problem of supervisors requesting personal favors. Explain that deciding whether or not to do a favor will depend on how big the favor is, how often the boss asks for personal favors, whether the supervisor has done personal favors for the employee in the past, whether

or not the favor violates company policies or laws, and whether other people at the same level are asked to do similar favors.

Pass out Handout 13, which will help participants to think about what to do if asked for personal favors. Read the case studies aloud as the participants read along with you. After reading, ask:

a. Do you think Don should do this favor for his boss? If not, is it because (1) the favor is too big; (2) the boss has asked too many times; (3) doing the favor is illegal; or (4) others at Don's level are not asked to do it? How would you tell the supervisor that you do not want to do what he or she has asked?

b. Do you think Lynda should do this favor for her boss? Why or why not?

Tell them to keep this handout in their folders.

RP Emphasize that it takes assertiveness to turn down a request for a favor. Tell them to look the boss squarely in the face, to say in a firm, polite manner that they refuse to do the favor, and to give their reason. To illustrate, ask two volunteers to role play the following conversation between Don and Mr. Lombardo:

Don: I'm sorry, Mr. Lombardo, but I really don't feel right about loading the merchandise from the dock to your car. I could get into trouble with the law.

Mr. Lombardo: Okay, okay. Forget it.

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6. Discuss the possible outcomes of refusing to do a favor for the supervisor. For instance, the boss may gain more respect for the employee due to the refusal. The supervisor may have no reaction at all, and instead, ask someone else to do the favor. Refusal may cause the supervisor to feel resentful or hostile toward the worker, which will make work unpleasant for a while. There is even an outside chance, if the favor is important enough, that the worker may be fired for his or her refusal. If this were to happen, the worker would have to decide whether or not to

talk to someone of authority about the situation.

7. For homework, tell the participants to write about how they would resolve the conflicts they discussed in their journal entries for last session, based on the information just given. Remind them that some of their supervisors' decisions may be difficult, but reasonable nonetheless.

8. Tell them that the next session will cover romance between people who work for the same company. Tell them to express their feelings about this type of romantic involvement in their journals.

Challenging the Supervisor's Decisions

Decide whether or not it would be appropriate to discuss your disagreement with the supervisor's decisions or requests in the following situations.

1. Your supervisor calls you into her office to tell you that she has some extra work for you to do. She asks you to complete 50 forms that she has not been able to get to because she is so busy, and carefully explains the procedure for completing them.

   In the past, you have only completed these forms with the help of another worker and feel very nervous about doing them on your own. You want to say that you cannot do them alone, but you see that she really needs your help.

2. Your boss tells you that he wants you to mop the entire store before you take your lunch. You know that it will take a long time and want to tell him that you would rather eat first.

3. One evening, you are busy stocking the shelves of a small grocery store. It is very crowded that night, and you are feeling stressed because you cannot seem to keep the special sale items on the shelves long enough to satisfy the customers.

   Suddenly, your boss comes up and says that **you** must continue to stock shelves, in addition to taking the time to show customers where to find items they are having difficulty locating. As you are showing a customer where to find paper plates, you notice that two of your co-workers are standing around in the magazine aisle doing nothing.

4. One of your co-workers recently told your boss that you are not doing your share of work in the mail room. The mail must be done by noon, and the two of you usually split it in half before distributing it among the employees.

   You have just begun taking a new medication that makes you feel very tired. As a result, you have not been able to get your half done by the deadline without help from your co-worker.

   You've tried to explain to your co-worker that this sleepiness will not last, and you only need his help temporarily. In spite of this, he becomes resentful and reports the problem to your boss. Without hearing your side of the story, the boss tells you that either you must get

Challenging the Supervisor's Decisions

(continued)

more sleep so that you can do your share of work, or you will have to find another job within a week.

5. Your boss has noticed that you almost always finish your work an hour before closing. In that hour, you usually talk to other workers or help them finish their own work.

   Your boss calls you into her office one morning to tell you that she has decided to increase your responsibilities, rather than allowing you to continue helping other workers during the hour before closing. You are scared that this will be more than you can handle.

6. You and a co-worker have been working together on a major project for months. It is nearing completion, so you both decide that it is time to give your boss a copy of what you have done. After looking everything over, your boss focuses all the praise and attention on your co-worker, even though you did equal amounts of work.

   Your supervisor decides to put a description of the project in the department's weekly newsletter, with your co-worker featured as the person responsible for the work. You think this is because this co-worker has been at the company a lot longer and, in the past, has done similar projects alone. However, you want your part in the project to be recognized, and it appears that neither your boss nor your co-worker is going to do that.

7. Your boss has just asked you to work on a job that you really dislike because it is quite tedious and uninteresting. Normally, one of your co-workers does this job, but she has been out sick for over a week. You really want to tell your boss to get someone else to do this task -- especially since you are extremely fatigued today.

Session 12, Handout 12

Answer key: 1). not appropriate to question her; ask a co-worker for help if necessary; 2). not appropriate to question; 3). appropriate to question, by explaining that the others could help out; 4). appropriate to question, with a calm explanation of the problem; 5). not appropriate to question; 6). appropriate to question, by pointing out your involvement in the project 7). not appropriate to question.

Case Study of Don

Don, a new worker, is on the loading dock unloading boxes of office supplies and putting them in the warehouse. His supervisor, Mr. Lombardo, walks over to Don, taps him on the shoulder, and says, "Hold it, Don. I want you to put that box into my car. Come with me, and I'll show you where my car is parked."

As Don begins to follow Mr. Lombardo, he thinks to himself, "This is illegal. Even though he is my boss, he can't ask me to do something that could get me in trouble. I know that none of my co-workers have ever done anything like this for Mr. Lombardo. I must stand up for myself and turn him down."

Case Study of Lynda

Lynda has just started working as a cashier in a large bookstore. One afternoon, as she is straightening up a particularly messy shelf of books, her supervisor, Ms. Johnstone, comes up to her and says, "Lynda, I'd like to see you in my office please."

Lynda follows her into her office and sits down in the chair closest to her supervisor's desk. Ms. Johnstone shuts the door and says to Lynda, "I am really happy with your work here. You have handled the customers very well and seem to get along nicely with the other workers." Lynda is pleased and thanks her boss for noticing.

Her supervisor then says, "I see that you have some extra time on your hands this afternoon, and I'm wondering if you would do me a big favor. I've ordered a lot of food for a party I'm giving tonight from the grocery store on the corner. They just called and want me to pick it up, but I'm waiting for a very important phone call. Would you mind going over there and picking up my order? I would really appreciate your help."

Related questions:

1. Do you think Don should do this favor for his boss? If not, is this because (a) the favor is too big; (b) the boss has asked too many times; (c) doing the favor is illegal; or (d) because others at Don's level are not asked to do it? How would you tell the supervisor that you do not want to do what he or she has asked?

2. Do you think Lynda should do this favor for her boss? Why or why not? Would it matter if Lynda's boss had done a similar favor for Lynda in the past, such as giving her a ride home from work or picking up supplies Lynda needed by a certain date but could not get herself?

Session 13: Friendships and Romance in the Workplace

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Discuss the reasons why it is important to avoid romantic involvements with co-workers;

2. Explore the differences between friendly and romantic involvements.

Materials: 4 handouts for each participant

Procedures:

1. Start the session by asking each participant to share one journal entry about how they would have resolved a past conflict with a supervisor using the information give in Session 12.

2. The work site is a good place for people to make friends, and they should be encouraged to do so (review Session 1 for a detailed discussion). However, the group members should learn how to discern between friendly or romantic intentions. If they believe that the interest is purely platonic, there is no reason why they should not socialize with the people at work. If, however, they believe that a co-worker is showing interest, they will have to decide whether dating a co-worker will endanger their jobs.

3. Begin with a discussion of why dating co-workers is often not a good idea. Tell the group that dating co-workers is different from dating other people in their lives for several reasons. The following are some of the reasons that businesses disapprove of romance in the workplace.

H14

   a. First, the presence of the person with whom the worker is involved will probably be distracting and keep both of them from doing their best work. A relationship also will prevent them from giving each other a gentle prodding when their performance is not what it ought to be.

      Handout 14 will help illustrate this this point. After reading it aloud, ask the following questions to prompt discussion:

1. How is Georgia's work performance affected by her relationship with Jerry?
2. How does the relationship affect Jerry's willingness to criticize her performance?

H15

b. Second, a romantic relationship at work may cause problems with other workers. They may feel resentful if the involved co-workers spend too much time and energy on each other instead of their job tasks. A particularly thorny problem arises if a worker dates the boss, because other workers may wonder if the boss is "playing favorites." To illustrate, pass out Handout 15. Read the case study aloud as the participants read along with you. After reading this, ask:

1. What complaints do Tenetha's co-workers have about her?
2. How does Tenetha feel about their criticism of her?

H16

c. Romantic relationships in the workplace become even more problematic if the involvement ends because the two will probably find it very difficult to work with each other. Unlike relationships that break up between two people who do not work together, break ups between co-workers are more difficult because these two still have to see each other every day. To demonstrate how difficult it is for two people who have broken up to work together, read the case study from Handout 16 as the participants read along with you. Afterward, ask:

1. What problems do Martin and Erica face at work now that they have broken up?
2. Do you think they will have a more difficult time coping with their break up because they work together?

H17

4. To help the participants understand the differences between friendly and romantic approaches, go over Handout 17 in class. Because they will want to and should make friends at work, it is important to understand these differences. Also, it is important to recognize that it may not be easy to turn down romantic interests because romance may be lacking in their lives.

In reality, many people **do** become romantically involved with co-workers, whether or not it is allowed. Thus, the most that you can do is advise the participants that such an involvement can lead to more trouble than it is worth in the long-run. You may wish to point out that dating a **former** co-worker after he or she leaves the job is less problematic and more feasible. Suggest that it would probably be easier to date someone from the old workplace who had expressed romantic interest in them after they have left the position. Instruct the participants to keep all of the handouts in their folders.

5. For homework, ask the participants to pick two of the situations from Handout 17 in which a co-worker is definitely expressing romantic interest in another worker, and to write out some of the possible consequences of a romantic involvement if one were to begin.

6. Inform them that they will learn ways to effectively deal with romantic pursuits in the next session.

Case Study of Georgia

Georgia has been working at a concession stand for three months. When she first started working there, she developed a crush on her co-worker, Jerry. They started dating about a month ago.

One busy Saturday, things seemed to go wrong all at once. The grill didn't work, the supply of hamburger buns ran low, and one of the workers went home sick. Georgia stood around staring lovingly at Jerry. She was supposed to be serving an ice cream cone to a customer, but was having trouble keeping her mind on her work. Finally, the customer yelled at her, "Hey, where's my cone!?"

Georgia didn't hear him, but Jerry did. He wanted to tell Georgia that a customer was getting angry at her, but he didn't want to hurt her feelings. Especially since he told her on their last date that he never wanted to do anything to upset her.

Finally, the customer called over Georgia's supervisor and complained about the way he was served. The supervisor warned Georgia that if she continued to daydream on the job she would get a poor evaluation.

Related questions:

1. How is Georgia's work performance affected by her relationship with Jerry?
2. How does the relationship affect Jerry's willingness to criticize her performance?

Session 13, Handout 14

Case Study of Tenetha

Tenetha has been working on the janitorial team for a month and a half. Recently, she began dating her boss, Mr. Glover. All the other members of the team have been talking about the romantic involvement when Tenetha and Mr. Glover are not around.

On a Monday morning before work, three of Tenetha's co-workers are sitting around a table in the lunch room. Tenetha has not yet arrived.

Dwayne says, "Ever since Tenetha and Mr. Glover have been going together, it seems as though she gets out of doing a lot of work."

"Yeah," grumbles Denise, "all she has to do is a little dusting and vacuuming."

"I wonder how much she tells Mr. Glover about our conversations," chimes in Alistair. "I think we have to be careful about what we say around Tenetha. Shhhh, here she comes now."

Tenetha comes over to the table and sits down wearily. "I'm bushed. I got in late last night."

Dwayne eyes Tenetha and says, "Yeah, I'll bet you did. It's going to be tough for you today, right? Mr. Glover will probably be after you all day!"

Everyone laughs, except Tenetha who says, "Hey you guys, lay off! You've really been picking on me lately." She storms out with a scowl.

Related questions:

1. What complaints do Tenetha's co-workers have about her?
2. How does Tenetha feel about their criticism of her?

Case Study of Martin and Erica

Martin and Erica work together in a law office and have been dating each other for four months. They had a fight a few nights ago when Erica accused Martin of being interested in her girlfriend. They've been avoiding each other ever since.

On Wednesday, they are working together in the mail room. Martin is glaring at Erica, who is trying her best to avoid looking at him as she sorts the mail. The supervisor, Miss Evans, strides into the room with a huge stack of letters.

"Stop what you're doing, everyone. We have to stuff these letters in envelopes and get them out right now. I'll need everyone's help."

Martin and Erica are forced to sit near each other to do the job. Martin quickly finishes his stack of letters. When she sees that Martin is done, Miss Evans commands, "Martin, take some letters from Erica's stack. She's going pretty slowly right now."

Erica shoves a bunch of letters over to Martin, and says out of the corner of her mouth, "Here, 'Mr. Speedy.'"

Martin and Erica wonder how long they can work together with so much tension in the air.

Related questions:

1. What problems do Martin and Erica face at work since their argument?
2. Do you think they will have a more difficult time dealing with one another because they work together?

Session 13, Handout 16

Friendly and Romantic Interests

Decide whether or not the following interactions between co-workers are friendly (F) or romantic (R).

1. Daniel asks Lynne to go out to lunch at the cafe across the street from their office. He mentions that friends at work usually split the bill when they go out, just to keep things fair.

2. After lunch one day, Anna comes back to her desk and finds a note from one of her co-workers. The note says that a group of people are going to the basketball game that weekend and that she should let her co-worker know if she is interested.

3. Edwardo discovers an envelope with his name on it in the pile of mail his boss has asked him to distribute. The note is from his co-worker, Tom, telling Edwardo how nice and handsome he is. Even though Edwardo is gay, he prefers not to date co-workers. However, he does not want Tom to think he dislikes him as a person.

4. Over the past month, Elena has become good friends with the person who works the afternoon shift with her at a local restaurant. Since they both love baseball, they always listen to the sports news together while on break. One day, while listening to the news, her co-worker reaches over, grabs her hand, and continues to hold it throughout the program.

5. Marni invites Bryan to go to a local restaurant after work one evening. She tells him that they won't be meeting the other 5 people from their department until 6:00, in case he has anything he needs to do before going.

6. Jon pulls Deborah aside one afternoon and tells her that he would like to have dinner with her the next night. He mentions that it would be fun, since his girlfriend is out of town for the weekend and would never know.

7. Jose notices that one of his co-workers has been following him around the store a lot lately. This co-worker has been giving him little gifts every day, and he is starting to feel like he should be returning some of the favors.

8. Jeni observes that one of her co-workers, Tyrone, has been very upset the past couple of days over a fight with his girlfriend. Because Jeni and her boyfriend have double dated with Tyrone and his girlfriend, she decides that she would like to do something to cheer him up. So, after work that day, she asks Tyrone if he would like to join her and her boyfriend to have coffee and talk.

Session 13, Handout 17

Answer key: 1). F 2). F 3). R 4). R 5). F 6). R 7). R 8). F

NEW WORKER: All I'm saying is that I never date anyone I work with. But I'd like to be friends.

CO-WORKER: All right. Let's just stay friends then.

NEW WORKER: Glad you understand. See you around!

---

3. Ask the participants to make up and role play situations in which they refuse the request for a date by a co-worker.

4. Explain to the participants that there are certain ways to act in order to discourage romantic involvements at work. These include:

   a. **Being cautious about the signals that they are sending.** If they dress or groom themselves provocatively, they can expect some people at work to interpret this as an invitation to flirt. Point out that their clothing should be neat, clean, and appropriate for the type of work they do. Ask each participant to tell the class what type of clothing and grooming would be appropriate in his or her work setting.

   b. **Avoiding overt physical contact with co-workers.** Some people casually touch another person's hand while they are talking or place a hand on the other person's shoulder. Emphasize that it is not a good idea to interact this way with the people at work because some of them may interpret these touches as sexual gestures.

2 RP

   c. **Being aware that some co-workers try to date all new workers, especially if they appear vulnerable.** Point out that some work settings contain employees who pride themselves on making "sexual conquests." Make it clear that this kind of person is <u>not</u> interested in a caring relationship, but instead, wants to brag to others about being the first to date a new co-worker.

      Tell the group that one way to avoid this kind of unwanted advance is to let it be known that they are married or in a steady dating relationship. If they are approached in a romantic way, and cannot think of any other reason for why they should not accept, they might want to

talk about having a busy social schedule. To illustrate, ask two participants to role play the following situations, in which the new worker is really inventing reasons why he or she will not go out:

CO-WORKER: I really like talking to you! And, well, I was wondering if you'd like to come over to my house sometime.

NEW WORKER: Oh, I'm keeping myself pretty busy lately. I really wouldn't have the time to come over.

CO-WORKER: Oh, really? What's on the agenda this week?

NEW WORKER: I'm getting together with some close friends a couple nights this week. I'm also going to a concert with a friend I know from school.

CO-WORKER: Sounds good. But I don't see why you couldn't fit in a visit to my place. Maybe I could give you some inside information about what it's like to work here, and you could give me a little inside information of your own!

NEW WORKER: Thanks, but I have all the inside information I want and all the friends that I can handle right now.

CO-WORKER: Oh, well, okay.

CO-WORKER: You look really nice today, (name of participant). In fact, you look nice every day! I'd really like to spend more time with you outside of work.

NEW WORKER: Thanks for the compliment. I really cannot go out with you. The person I'm involved with and I decided not to date other people.

CO-WORKER: Oh, okay. Well, I'll see you around.

---

5. Now, begin a discussion about sexual harassment in the workplace. Explain to the group members that sexual harassment is prohibited by both federal and state laws and that it is considered to be a form of sex discrimination. Define sexual harassment as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Give the following examples:

a. conduct is sexual harassment when it forces a worker to submit to unwanted advances as a condition of remaining employed;
b. conduct is sexual harassment when the worker's refusal is used as a basis for decisions at work;
c. conduct is sexual harassment when it interferes with the worker's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

RP 6. Inform the group that if they believe they are being sexually harassed they should first discuss the situation with family, friends, or their case workers. If appropriate, they then should contact their supervisor (or the supervisor's supervisor if the direct supervisor is the cause of the alleged sexual harassment). Tell them that they should not pursue official channels without first firmly discouraging the behavior they find offensive. As an example, role play the following situation with a female participant:

CO-WORKER: Hey, sweetie. You're looking good today. (Puts arm around new worker's shoulder.)

NEW WORKER: You're making me feel uncomfortable. Please take your arm off my shoulder.

CO-WORKER: You like it. Admit it, you like the attention!

NEW WORKER: I absolutely do not. If we are going to be able to get our work done here, you're going to have to respect my wishes.

CO-WORKER: Come on, most women wish I would pay more attention to them!

NEW WORKER: Well I really am not interested. Please don't touch me again.

CO-WORKER: (Removes arm from new worker's shoulder.) Okay, if you're going to be <u>that</u> way about it, I'll leave you alone.

NEW WORKER: Thank you.

---

7. Be sure to tell the group that men also can be the object of sexual harassment at work. Be sensitive to the fact that men may be embarrassed to admit that they are being

sexually harassed. Emphasize that everyone has the right to work in an environment free of unwanted sexual attention.

8. For homework, ask the participants to list in their journals the tactics they believe are most useful and sensible for circumventing romantic approaches. In addition, encourage them to think of ideas that were not discussed in class.

9. Tell them that the next session is about quitting a job. Also, ask them to find out from family or friends the reasons they have had for quitting their jobs and to record these reasons in their journals. If they cannot gather this information, ask them to give their opinions about what circumstances warrant quitting.

Session 15: Knowing Your Rights as an Employee

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Understand the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and how they apply to persons with mental illness;

2. Understand the concept of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, and gender;

3. Role play ways to deal with situations where they believe they are the target of illegal discrimination at work.

Materials: 1 role play transparency and accompanying handout
1 handout for each participant

Procedures:

1. Inform group members that a new law called the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed by Congress in June 1990. Under this new legislation, employers must provide something called "reasonable accommodation" to an individual's disability in the workplace. Ask participants to think about ways in which they would have an easier time at work if special arrangements could be made to help them deal with their illness. You might wish to start the discussion by giving some of the following examples:

   a. having more time to learn new job tasks;
   b. knowing that their jobs would be protected in the event of a rehospitalization;
   c. being able to work in a quieter room during periods of high stress when they are experiencing symptoms;
   d. having a job coach on site to help them during periods of difficulty;
   e. flexible scheduling of work hours;
   f. rearranging job tasks or sharing job responsibilities with other workers.

   If you are a consumer-instructor (or even a professional), some examples from your own personal job experiences will help the group feel more comfortable in discussing the concept of reasonable accommodation.

2. Tell participants that the ADA now applies to all employers with 25 or more workers. By 1992, the ADA will apply to firms with 15 or more employees. Ask participants to think about whether or not the ADA currently applies at their particular work setting.

3. Explain that there is some ambiguity in this new law because employers do not have to make accommodations that may cause "undue harm" to their organization. This means that if an employee requests an accommodation that the employer can show would be bad for business, the employer can refuse to make that accommodation. Ask participants to list the kinds of requests their own employers might be able to reject on this basis. For example, if participants are employed in a one-person office and ask to be excused from duties that involve paperwork (perhaps because of medication side effects such as blurred vision), an employer might argue that rearrangement of job tasks is impossible because no other employee is available to complete the paperwork. Be aware that participants may not agree on what is or is not reasonable. Explain to them that many people are unsure of what will be interpreted as reasonable accommodations for workers with psychiatric disabilities.

4. Inform participants that, because this law is relatively new, employers may not be aware of the concept of reasonable accommodation and how it applies to a worker with a psychiatric disability. Explain that employers may need to be gently reminded that mental illness is a disability just like hearing impairment or cerebral palsy. Furthermore, employers may need to be told that people with mental illness need accommodations to help them perform well at work much as a person might need a ramp if they use a wheel chair or a braille reader if they are blind.

5. Point out that, because employers may not initially be sensitive to these issues, it is up to participants to request reasonable accommodations by employers and to place these requests in the context of their disability. Suggest that participants ask for the accommodation first and only mention the ADA if employers seem resistant to being

reasonable. Also, mention that it is virtually impossible to be protected under the ADA unless the worker is willing to be honest with the employer about his or her disability. Because some people do not wish to make known their disability at work, they may have chosen not to tell anyone. You may wish to engage participants in a discussion of the pros and cons of revealing their disability, even with the protection of the ADA.

RP 6. In order to show participants how to approach employers with a request for a reasonable accommodation, ask volunteers to role play the following situation:

EMPLOYEE: When I was first hired for this position, we discussed the fact that I had been hospitalized for depression. Lately, I've been experiencing some symptoms that make it hard for me to do that survey of new customers as you requested. I'm happy to do the work, but I'm finding it very difficult to make phone calls to strangers right now.

EMPLOYER: I am sorry that you've been having trouble lately. To tell you the truth, I didn't even notice.

EMPLOYEE: Barb mentioned the other day that you've assigned her quite a bit of filing to do this week. I was wondering if you would mind if ask Barb to switch assignments for this week? That way, both tasks would be completed on time.

EMPLOYER: I don't have any objection to that. Feel free to ask her, and let me know what she says.

EMPLOYEE: Thanks very much. I appreciate your understanding.

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7. **Explain to the group that it is illegal for employers to discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, or gender. Tell them that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits race and sex discrimination in hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, fringe benefits, and other aspects of employment.**

Employees of most private firms, local governments, and public or private educational institutions are protected by this legislation. Also covered are employment agencies, labor unions, and apprenticeship programs. Ask each participant to think about what kind of organization they work for and whether or not it is covered by Title VII.

8. Explain further that the Equal Pay Act of 1963 (as amended) prohibits sex discrimination in payment of wages to women and men performing substantially equal work in the same establishment. This means that workers who do similar work in the same organization should receive similar pay and that "men's" jobs can not be paid higher than "women's" jobs when the nature of the work performed is essentially the same. For example, if there are two janitorial positions and one involves cleaning the supervisors' offices (often the "woman's" job) and another involves cleaning the factory floor (often the "man's" job), both should be paid the same. Tell the group that many employees not covered by Title VII (because their employer's business is too small) are covered by the Equal Pay Act.

9. Tell participants that any instances in which they feel they are being discriminated against because of race, ethnicity, or sex should be discussed with a caseworker, vocational staff member, family, or friends before proceeding. When something unfair occurs at work, it is often people's first reaction to claim that they are the victims of discrimination. It is in the participants' best interests to describe the situation to others before complaining to their employers or filing a complaint. Give the participants the toll-free telephone number for the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), 1-800-USA-EEOC, in case they need to obtain more information.

10. If, after discussing the situation with others, the employee wishes to proceed with a claim of discrimination, it is best to approach the supervisor directly and ask for an appointment to discuss the problem. In many cases, the situation can be resolved at this point and there will be no need to proceed further. If not, advice can be

obtained from an EEOC field office about the procedures to take in pursuing a formal complaint.

H18

11. Pass out **Handout 18**, a series of case examples designed to help participants recognize discriminatory behavior in the workplace. Ask group members to think of some examples in addition to these, and spend time discussing their ideas.

12. For homework, ask the group to list in their journals the two ways they would feel most comfortable handling discrimination in the workplace should they be faced with it.

13. Inform the group that the next session will deal with how to go about quitting a job.

Case Examples

1. Germaine has been employed at a shoe store for over three years. It is a job she obtained on her own and she has never shared her psychiatric disability status with her employer and co-workers. Lately, Germaine has been experiencing symptoms and her psychiatrist has suggested that she go into the hospital for a 2-week medication re-evaluation. Since Germaine does not have 2 weeks of vacation time saved up, she is faced with telling her employer the real reason she has to be absent from work. Germaine is considering quitting her job to avoid having to tell her supervisor why she needs the time off.

What should Germaine do?

2. Suzanne is a 32 year old woman who was the company's first female electrician when she was hired 5 years ago. Her boss is a 55 year old man who has made it known that he is unhappy about supervising a woman. He often passes interesting assignments to the male electricians, saying that they are "too complicated" for a woman.

What should Suzanne do?

3. James is the only African-American employee on his crew at the factory. One day, he overhears his foreman, who is white, making a comment about how he thinks blacks can't handle quality control tasks. James knows that he has never been assigned to the quality control jobs on his crew, but did not realize why until now. Besides feeling very angry, James knows that experience with quality control assignments is a prerequisite for promotion within his company, which he is up for next month. He is afraid that his foreman's policy may hurt his chances of advancement.

What should James do?

Session 16: Quitting a Job

Objectives: The participants will:

1. List various steps to take before deciding to quit;

2. Discuss how to let the supervisor know they are intending to quit;

3. Role play how to tell a supervisor that they are quitting their jobs.

Materials: 2 role play transparencies and accompanying handouts
2 handouts for each participant

Procedures:

1. First, review last week's session by asking the participants to share from their journals the strategies they would find to be most realistic and reasonable when trying to cope with discrimination in the workplace. Encourage them to share any ideas they had which were not discussed. Record these examples and decide whether or not they could be used in future sessions.

2. Now, ask them to share the reasons for quitting given by family and friends. Prompt discussion about whether or not they think these reasons are valid.

3. Begin by pointing out that many people occasionally feel dissatisfied with their jobs and job performance. Employees often go through phases of liking and then disliking their jobs; **normally**, periods of dissatisfaction do not warrant quitting. Moreover, it is common to be unsure about whether or not one is suited for a certain job. It can take several months before one is certain about job fit and job satisfaction.

4. **Before quitting a job, employees should give consideration to the reasons for their dissatisfaction. This requires being honest about what is bothering them and whether or not these reasons warrant quitting. The following is a list of valid reasons to leave a job if, over time, the job has not worked out for the employee:**

a). Employees may find that the pay is so low that they cannot maintain a decent standard of living. In other words, the basic need for food, clothing, and shelter cannot be adequately met unless they take on another job for greater pay. This may be the case for piece-rate work or for part-time employment.

b). Sometimes, employees will receive a better job offer. Tell the participants that people who are dissatisfied with their work situations often apply for other jobs while they are still employed. This way, they will avoid a period of unemployment between jobs. If an employee receives an offer for a job that is better than the one currently held, he or she is wise to accept it and to give the employer the standard two weeks notice to hire another worker.

H19

c). Occasionally, work may be too difficult for the employee, either physically or emotionally. Provide the participants with examples by reading aloud the case studies from Handout 19 while they read along with you. After reading, ask:

1. Why is Clark having such a hard time doing work at the hospital?
2. What problem is preventing Francine from doing her job the way she used to be able to?

Tell participants to save this handout.

d). The hours employees are expected to work may not fit into their schedules. For example, if they have decided to take a heavier schedule of college courses, this change may interfere with working hours.

e). As was discussed in Sessions 11 and 12, employees may have irreconcilable conflicts with their supervisors.

Emphasize that it is valid to quit because of conflicts only if employees have made every effort to resolve the problems.

f). Sometimes, employees may grow beyond the skill levels required by their jobs. The employees may master the skills necessary to carry out the responsibilities of their jobs and feel ready to move on to new challenges. To illustrate this example, pass out Handout 20. Read the case study aloud as the participants read with you. Afterward, ask:

1. What job does Edna have, and how good is she at doing it?
2. Why does she want to move on to a new job?
3. Why does Felicia want to take the new job at the restaurant?

Ask the participants to save this handout.

5. Point out that **invalid** reasons for quitting a job include the following: a spat with the supervisor, a few weeks of boredom, a brief period of exhaustion, or minor conflicts with co-workers. Explain that these reasons are not satisfactory because they are usually short-lived problems that people encounter in almost **any** job.

6. Be sensitive to the fact that group members may want to quit their jobs because the work is not what they have aspired to in the past. Like anyone, they have dreams of pursuing careers that are exciting or glamorous. Due to the nature of their illnesses, however, they may not be able to attain the career goals that they and their families had set for them. Help the participants recognize and express feelings of disappointment if they are no longer able to pursue earlier career goals. Be aware that this may be difficult, but that talking about the careers they had hoped to have may be an important step toward feeling good about their present employment.

Moreover, help them to understand that any career is a process, which often involves holding several different jobs for long periods of time. For example, it is not at all unusual for anyone aspiring to a Paralegal position to work in a law office or firm running errands, sorting mail, or doing clerical work. Point out that plenty of people do not have their ideal jobs. While

this may be upsetting, it is not necessarily a reflection of self-worth or ability. It is just the way things work out sometimes. Mention that it is possible to remain active in their fields of interest through related jobs and activities or volunteer work.

2 RP 7. Tell the participants to seek the advice of their family members, friends, or case workers before deciding whether or not to quit a job. These people can give objective opinions on whether the reasons for quitting are valid. If, after talking to others about his or her reasons for dissatisfaction, all agree that quitting is a wise move, the individual will have to go to the supervisor with this decision.

Explain that taking this step may be difficult. If the participants are pleasant and positive when talking to their supervisors, as well as clear about why they are leaving, they can make the experience easier for everyone involved. Ask volunteers to role play the following situations in order to illustrate this concept:

WORKER: Good morning, (name of participant). I want you to know that I have learned a lot while working with you. You've taught me how to be fast and efficient when waiting on tables. Now, I'm ready to move on to a new opportunity. I've decided to accept a job offer from another restaurant which has better pay and hours for me right now.

SUPERVISOR: I really hate to see you go, but I certainly can understand why you're ready to learn something new. You've really made progress with this job, and you're definitely ready to try your hand at a job that requires more skills. I wish you the best of luck in your new job. And remember, if you need a recommendation in the future, be sure to ask me.

WORKER: Thanks very much. I really appreciate it.

WORKER: Good morning, (name of participant). I asked to meet with you because I have decided to leave this job and wanted you to be the

first to know. Besides, I wanted to give you two weeks to find someone to take my place.

SUPERVISOR: Oh, well, this does come as a surprise!

WORKER: Yes, I know. I am having some personal difficulties and feel it would be best for everyone involved if I leave this job. But, I want to thank you for everything you've taught me. You've been very helpful, and I appreciate all you've done.

SUPERVISOR: I'm glad that you've had a good experience here, and I wish you all the best in whatever you decide to do. If you need a recommendation, please let me know. And, I will expect you to teach the new person everything we taught you before you leave.

WORKER: I would be happy to do that, and if you need anything else done, please let me know.

SUPERVISOR: I will. Thanks.

Also, explain that it is important to give adequate notice when quitting. Two weeks is the minimum for most businesses.

8. Tell them that before leaving a job they must determine whether they have any back or vacation pay owed to them, as well as any benefits to be transferred. Tell them to find out whether or not they can collect unemployment or need to make changes in their Social Security Insurance benefits.

9. For homework, tell the participants to write in their journals any reasons they have for feeling dissatisfied with their jobs and whether or not these are valid reasons to quit.

10. Inform them that the next session will cover coping with being laid-off or fired from a job.

Case Study of Clark

Clark recently got a job cleaning rooms, filling water jugs, and emptying bedpans in a hospital. About two weeks after he began working, he noticed that he was becoming more and more depressed. In fact, he could barely get himself to go to work, and once there, took the whole morning to do work that used to take him an hour. His supervisor noticed that he was having some difficulty completing tasks and asked to meet with him one morning.

She asked Clark to think about what was bothering him, and to report back to her the next morning. Upon thinking about it, Clark realized that because he is prone to depression anyway, it is very difficult for him to be around people who are sick every day of the week. He decided that he was becoming too focused on the sad things in life and that this was affecting the quality of his work.

Case Study of Francine

Francine has been working as a welder for several months in a local garage. She has just had a change in medication, which is causing her hands to shake quite a bit. She now has to work much more slowly than she had to before she switched medications.

Francine's supervisor has asked her to weld a dozen parts within the next hour -- something she would have done in the past without a problem, but now has difficulty completing. Francine is worried that she will lose her job because she cannot do the work at the pace she once maintained.

Related questions:

1. **Why is Clark having such a hard time doing work at the hospital?**
2. **What problem is preventing Francine from doing her job the way she used to be able to?**

Session 16, Handout 19

Case Study of Edna

Edna has held her job at the factory for six months. She is responsible for filling travel kits once they have been sewn. Edna quickly learned how to do the job and is very good at it. In fact, she can finish doing a kit faster than anyone in her work area. Her co-workers realize how skilled she is and sometimes ask her for help.

Within the last month or so, Edna has become dissatisfied with her job. She feels that she would like to move to another job that requires higher-level skills. She knows that her current job was a good place to start, but is now interested in finding something more challenging.

Case Study of Felicia

Felicia has been working at a restaurant cleaning tables for almost one year. She has become very efficient at this task and always cleans her tables more quickly than any other worker. Because of this, she often does not have enough to keep her busy while at work and has become bored.

Recently, her supervisor announced a job opening for someone to hostess and schedule parties and large events at the restaurant. Felicia thinks that she would be good at this job and that it would be more interesting than the job tasks at which she has become extremely skilled.

Related questions:

1. What job does Edna have, and how good is she at doing it?
2. Why does she want to move on to a new job?
3. Why does Felicia want to take the other job at the restaurant?

Session 16, Handout 20

Session 17: Coping with Being Laid-Off or Fired

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Consider the possibilities of being laid-off or fired from a job, for either fair or unfair reasons;

2. Discuss some ways to cope with being fired solely on the basis of behaviors associated with their illness;

3. Examine how being laid-off or fired may affect their feelings of self-worth.

Materials: 2 handouts for each participant

Procedures:

1. Start this session by asking each participant to share one example he or she had regarding job dissatisfaction. Also, be sure to discuss the appropriateness of the decision if anyone is thinking of quitting.

2. It is possible that some of the people involved in this group will be laid-off from their jobs at one time or another. Convey to them that, although it might upsetting, and could even be a major set-back, being laid-off is not necessarily a reflection of their worth or abilities as employees. Sometimes, businesses are forced to cut back, and employees will have no control over who stays and who goes.

3. It also is possible that the participants will be fired from jobs for either fair or unfair reasons. This issue will be difficult to discuss because it may not always be clear whether events that lead to a firing are due to behaviors characteristic of mental illness or to other behaviors. If they are fired on the basis of their illness, this could be upsetting and stressful.

4. Ask the group to think of legitimate reasons for firing someone. Prompt them with the following examples, such as when an employee can not learn job tasks over a long period of time; when an employee is unable to get along with other workers and is overly unpleasant or uncooperative; when an employee has a poor attitude about his or her work; when an

employee comes to work late on a regular basis; or when an employee is often absent from work without giving advance notice.

Point out that when an employee exhibits such poor work behaviors, the supervisor is likely to tell the employee that he or she will be fired if there is no improvement. However, the boss also could fire the employee for these types of behavior without any warning.

5. Unfortunately, individuals with psychiatric disabilities may be fired on the basis of behaviors Associated with their illness over which they have little control. Some of these behaviors include: inappropriate outbursts of emotion; uncontrollable or even frightening actions; changes in speech patterns; or side effects associated with psychotropic medications, such as facial ticks or poor control over motor skills.

H21 Pass out Handout 21, a summary of the fair and unfair reasons for being fired.

H22 Handout 22 will help to demonstrate the differences between being fired for fair and unfair reasons. After reading it with the participants, ask:

a. Why was Maya fired from her job? Do you think her boss was fair in firing her?
b. Why was Willie fired from his job? Do you think this was fair of his boss?

Instruct them to save both of these handouts in their folders for future reference.

6. In some cases, individuals may be able to prove that they were fired on the basis of their illness, which is clearly discriminatory. However, pursuing this may not always be a possible or desirable course of action for every individual. Tell them that before deciding whether to fight or accept being fired, participants should discuss all the consequences with case workers, counselors, family members, or friends.

7. Whether or not they decide to take legal action, they all need to learn ways to cope with being fired, so that it will not affect their feelings of self-esteem and self-worth.

Try to convey the understanding that their worth and abilities are not determined by the manifestations of their illness. It also is important to impart that being fired does not mean that they will always be unsuccessful at a job. This is especially true if they are able to use the circumstances under which they were fired to learn how to monitor, and maybe control, their behaviors.

For example, in another job, if they see that they are behaving in ways that make co-workers uncomfortable, they can go to their case workers or counselors for advice about how to best handle the situation. Or, if both they and their case workers think it appropriate, either one of them could go to the employer to explain and remedy the situation.

8. For homework, ask the participants to list a few people they can turn to if they feel that they need to work on certain aspects of their behavior in the workplace.

9. Tell them that the next session concentrates on how to behave when terminating a job for any reason. Ask them to write about times in the past when they have had to separate from any of the people to whom they are close.

Case study of Maya

Maya has been bagging groceries at a large grocery store for three months. She is not happy with her job, so is rarely in a good mood while working. When customers ask questions or make requests, she usually responds with an unpleasant remark.

Over the past two weeks, she has been coming into work anywhere from 15 to 20 minutes late. Today, she skipped the entire morning because she felt ill, but neglected to call anyone at work to let them know she would not be in until the afternoon. When she finally came into work, her boss met her at the door and told her she was fired.

Case study of Willie

For the past seven months, Willie has been working at an office sorting mail, answering phones, and running errands. Two weeks ago, he stopped taking his medication. Because of this, he has been experiencing some difficulty in completing tasks, and his co-workers have had to finish a lot of his work for him. His thoughts are quite jumbled, and he often becomes confused in mid-conversation.

Yesterday, he was trying to tell his co-workers something he had heard on the news. Because he was so excited, he was speaking extremely quickly, and they could not follow what he was explaining. When he started to speak even more quickly and to make gestures while telling his story, his co-workers expressed irritation, and walked away. They went to their boss and told her about his behavior during the past two weeks.

Later that day, Willie saw his boss, and he tried to explain the story to her. She was taken aback by his behavior, told him that she had heard he was acting in an intolerable way, and fired him on the spot.

Related questions:

1. Why was Maya fired from her job?
2. Do you think her boss was fair in firing her?
3. Why was Willie fired from his job?
4. Do you think this was fair of his boss?

Fair and Unfair Reasons for Being Fired

After being fired from a job, it is important for the worker to sort out whether or not the reasons behind the supervisor's decision were fair. Gaining this understanding will help the worker to handle similar situations in the future in a different, possibly more effective way. If you feel that you have been fired for unfair reasons, make sure to discuss the situation with your family, friends, or case workers. The following are some of the more common reasons for being fired.

Fair reasons for being fired:

1. The employee is not able to learn the job tasks, even over a long period of time.
2. The employee is never able to get along with other employees and is overly unpleasant or uncooperative.
3. The employee has a poor attitude about his or her work.
4. The worker comes to work late on a regular basis.
5. The employee is often absent from work and fails to give advance notice.

Unfair reasons for being fired:

1. The employee exhibits a rare but inappropriate outburst of emotion due to his or her illness.
2. The worker is not always able to control his or her behavior, and, in some way, scares or irritates other workers.
3. The employee experiences noticeable changes in speech patterns due to his or her illness.
4. The employee sometimes has difficulty controlling some of the side effects associated with his or her medications.
5. The employee experiences a period of feeling tired and confused, and does not want to work or talk to co-workers.
6. The employee goes through a period in which he or she does not pay attention to personal grooming or hygiene due to certain symptomatology.

Session 17, Handout 22

Session 18: Appropriate Behaviors Following Job Termination

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Discuss the feelings that may arise due to leaving a job for any reason;

2. Examine appropriate and inappropriate ways of interacting with co-workers and supervisors after job termination;

3. Role play acceptable interactions with co-workers and supervisors after job termination.

Materials: 4 role play transparencies and accompanying handouts
1 handout for each participant

Procedures:

1. Begin by asking the participants to share their journal entries about separation, if they feel comfortable doing so. Tell them that leaving a job may evoke in them some of the same feelings they have experienced in the past when separating from a familiar person or place.

2. Explain that recognizing the feelings commonly associated with separation is the first step toward effective coping. The following are some of the more common feelings experienced by workers who terminate employment for any reason.

   a. It is common to be **sad** when leaving a job. The person leaving has become acquainted with co-workers and may have developed a fairly close friendship with one or two of them.

   b. It is also common to feel **angry** when terminating employment. This is especially true if the employees leave because of conflicts with co-workers or supervisors.

   c. **People leaving a job may feel frightened. The employee will be venturing into the unknown, and this can evoke feelings of panic. Simultaneous feelings of confidence and fear are not an uncommon when starting over, no matter what the situation.**

2 RP

3. Once participants recognize their feelings about separation, they have to decide how best to resolve them. Advise them to share their feelings with case workers, family, and friends because these people may have useful suggestions based on their own experiences. Point out that if they feel sad about saying goodbye to employees, it is a good idea to convey these feelings in a clear, simple fashion. Suppressing the feelings could make their last few days at work miserable. To illustrate how to express sad feelings in an appropriate way, ask two participants to role play the following situation:

DEPARTING WORKER: Hello, (name of participant). Before I leave, I just wanted to tell you how grateful I am that I had you to turn to when I had questions about my job tasks. You were always so willing to help me out.

CO-WORKER: No problem! You learned very quickly, and I enjoyed working with you.

DEPARTING WORKER: I had a good time, too. I'll miss you.

CO-WORKER: I'll miss you, too. Good luck!

DEPARTING WORKER: Thanks, and best of luck to you.

Tell the participants that even if they are angry when leaving a job, they must avoid expressing their hostility to the supervisor. A supervisor can give them a recommendation for another job, so it is to their advantage to remain calm and professional. They want to leave a positive final impression of themselves with co-workers and supervisors.

Also, if they are feeling scared about leaving, they may decide to communicate this to a close friend at work. He or she may be able to help them cope with some of their feelings, since they know exactly the ways in which the departing worker has experienced the job. Ask two volunteers to role play the following situation to illustrate this point:

DEPARTING WORKER: You know, I really am looking forward to going to another job, but I'm kind of scared.

CO-WORKER: I know what you mean. You really learned to do this job efficiently, and you fit in with everyone so quickly! It is always scary to face an unfamiliar situation and to leave one that you already know so well.

DEPARTING WORKER: Yeah, that's right. You just never know if you'll learn the new job as quickly, or meet nice people.

CO-WORKER: Well, that is true, but think about how scared you were before you came here. In spite of that, you were able to meet nice people and learn a lot. Besides, just because you were able to catch on quickly **here** does not mean you'll be expected to learn your new job as quickly. Every job is different.

DEPARTING WORKER: You're right. And I've heard that the people at my next job are friendly and helpful. I'm sure they'll give me some support. Thanks for talking to me. It really helped.

CO-WORKER: No problem! This is my third job, and it has always helped me to talk about starting over with friends at work.

H23

4. Tell the participants that they will be expected to act in certain ways when interacting with co-workers upon leaving a job. Pass out Handout 23, which summarizes the following points:

   a). Tell them that saying good-bye to people is fine, but that spending too much time talking to others, even if it is the last day, is not advisable. By engaging co-workers in conversation for long periods of time, the flow of work is disrupted. Also, if the supervisor notices that the departing worker is taking up a lot of company time by chatting, he or she may not be left with the best impression of that employee.

   b). Remind them to say positive things to supervisors and co-workers, even if they have negative feelings about their workplaces. Tell the participants that people at work can be a valuable source of future job leads.

c). Advise the group to be clear and consistent when telling co-workers why they are leaving. If they do not want to reveal their exact reasons, they can say something vague such as they are leaving for personal reasons.

d). Tell them that if they hang around the office after their last day of work, people probably will feel uncomfortable. Once again, this will be disruptive to workers.

e). Ask that they remember to clean out their work areas thoroughly. If they leave anything behind, it would inconvenience the person who has to return their belongings. Instruct them to save the handout.

RP 5. Ask two participants to role play the following conversation to show how to interact well with co-workers when leaving a job:

DEPARTING WORKER: Good-bye, (name of participant). You know, I've really enjoyed working with you. I've especially appreciated your sense of humor when I goofed up during those first few weeks. The way you came to the rescue really helped!

CO-WORKER: It's really been nice knowing you. I was more than happy to help out. So, you're moving on to bigger and better things?

DEPARTING WORKER: Well, I'm moving on to some new challenges. I enjoyed this job, but I am looking forward to a new one as well.

CO-WORKER: I think that's great! Best of luck to you! (Offers hand to departing worker.)

DEPARTING WORKER: (Offers hand to co-worker) You too!

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6. Now ask the participants to create some situations in which a departing worker is interacting in a positive way with a co-worker.

RP 7. Tell the participants that sometimes a departing worker is formally presented with a small gift or card just before he or she leaves. Also, at times, the departing worker

is called upon to give a brief speech to co-workers. To illustrate, ask two participants to role play the following situation:

CO-WORKER: We'd like to present you with this small token of our appreciation for all the work you've done. We've enjoyed working with you! We wish you luck.

DEPARTING WORKER: Thank you very much. I really enjoyed this job. The people here make this a great company. I'll miss all of you. Thanks for everything.

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8. Inform the participants that the last session will be devoted to summarizing this course, as well as to saying goodbye to one another.

Suggested Guidelines for Appropriate Behavior When Leaving a Job

When you are leaving a job for **any** reason, you ought to interact with supervisors and co-workers in a positive way. You may not always feel like behaving in this way, but by doing so you will make the experience easier for everyone involved. Here are some ways to go about this.

1. Of course, you will want to say good-bye to supervisors and co-workers, especially since you will have made friends. However, try not to spend too much of your last day talking to others because this will disrupt their work schedules and deadlines. Also, if your supervisor notices that you are taking up too much company time by chatting, he or she may not be left with the best impression of you.

2. It is good to say positive things to people before you leave, even if you have negative feelings about working with them. For example, if you wish to speak to co-workers before departing, it is best to mention enjoyable aspects of working with them, such as their humor or patience. This is a nice thing to do, and people at work also can be helpful in providing you with future job leads if needed.

3. Try to be clear and consistent when you tell people why you are leaving. If you do not want to reveal the exact reasons, you can say something vague like you are leaving for personal reasons.

4. It is best not to hang around the office after your last day. This probably will make co-workers feel uncomfortable and keep them from their work.

5. Remember to take home all personal items from your office or work area. If you leave anything behind, you most likely will be inconveniencing the person who has to mail these things to you.

Session 19: Summarizing and Evaluating the Social Skills at Work Curriculum

Objectives: The participants will:

1. Integrate the different experiences that they had in the Social Skills at Work curriculum;

2. Complete the Social Skills at Work Evaluation, as well as provide verbal feedback to instructors about their satisfaction with course materials;

3. Recognize their feelings about leaving the group and share these in an appropriate manner with other group members and staff.

Materials: 1 copy of the Social Skills at Work Evaluation for each participant

Procedures:

1. Ask each participant's case worker to complete again the Waksman Social Skills Rating Form about his or her client. This will help to assess changes in the participants' social skills after participation in this group.

2. Before class, review the introduction and first session for a summary of course goals. To begin this session, briefly review each of the preceding lessons with the participants in order to help them summarize the things that they have learned, as well as to recognize the ways they have met course goals.

3. Also, ask participants to share their personal reactions to the information given in this course and the instructional methods you have used. Prompt them by giving your own reactions to the way things went. At this point, do not encourage discussion of their feelings about one another or saying goodbye, but stick to feedback about actual course structure. They will be given ample time at the end of this session to explore their feelings about leaving the group.

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4. Instruct the participants to complete the Social Skills at Work Evaluation, and tell them that they do not have to put their names on it (so they can be completely honest). Be sure to thank them for their input about this and the program in general.

5. Encourage the participants to review the materials that they have saved in their folders and journal entries regularly. They will find these handouts and journal entries helpful when they run into work situations that were discussed in this group.

6. When speaking to the participants individually and/or as a class, express your own feelings about separating from the group, and model an appropriate way to say goodbye. Encourage each participant to find an acceptable way to say goodbye to each other and to you.

SOCIAL SKILLS AT WORK EVALUATION

Mark True (T) or False (F) after the following statements:

1. The information covered in this group seemed very related to the real work world. _____

2. I will use what I learned in this group at work fairly often. _____

3. I learned that I already had some good social skills while I was in this group. _____

4. I feel better about myself since I participated in this group. _____

5. I feel better about working because I participated in this group. _____

6. I feel more self-confident about working since being in this group. _____

7. I liked this group. _____

8. This group helped me to talk about some of the things that happen to me while at work. _____

9. If I could change or improve this group, I would:

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. Please write any other comments that you may have about this group.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____